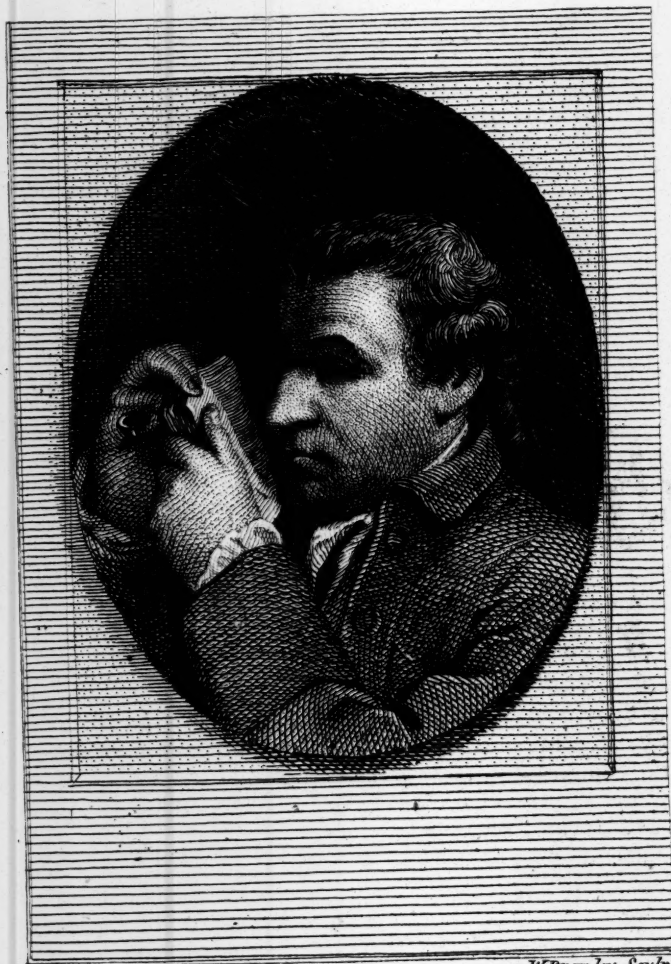


J. Reynolds Pinx^t

W. Bromley Sculp^t

JOS^{PH} BARETTI Esq^r.



J. Reynolds Pinx^t

W. Bromley Sculp^t

JOS^{PH} BARETTI Esq^r.

Nov 28

1858

THE LATE MISS THRALE.

The populous homes of Death have just received within their portals one who formed almost the last link of the chain which bound together the past and present generations, and a few words would seem but a just, though passing, notice of the occurrence.

The deceased lady was the youngest daughter (Lady Keith having died recently) of MR. and MRS. THRALE, both of considerable celebrity themselves, and forming the nucleus of a circle of still greater. MR. THRALE was the proprietor of the famous brew house, now, and since his death, known as that of BARCLAY and PERKINS; was Member for Southwark; and a wealthy and influential man, whose house was the resort of many of the most eminent men of his time. He married one of the beauties of her day, Miss Hester Lynch Salusbury, whose contribution to light literature, both as MRS. THRALE, and by her second marriage, MRS. PROZZI, are known enough to require no further reference. At his table were to be found such men as GOLDSMITH, MURPHY, DR. BEATTIE, DR. and MRS. BURNEY, SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS, LANGTON, OGLETHORPE GARRICK, *cum multis aliis*, and, greater than them all, DR. JOHNSON, with "the tin kettle tied to his tail," Boswell. It was idly imagined that MR. THRALE's mental endowments were of very secondary character compared with those of his wife, but DR. JOHNSON, who must have known them both better than any one else, says, "It is a great mistake to suppose that she is above him in literary attainments. She is more flippant, but he has ten times her learning. He is a regular scholar, but her learning is that of a schoolboy in one of the lower forms." The illustrious lexicographer was introduced to the family of MR. THRALE in 1765, through the instrumentality of MURPHY, and in the library of MR. THRALE's house at *Streatham* many of JOHNSON's writings were composed. Every reader of JOHNSON is familiar with his impromptu addresses to MRS. THRALE (who was complaining to him that, because she was thirty-five years of age, no one sent her any verses on her birthday), beginning—

Of in dangers, yet alive,
We are come to thirty-five,
&c., &c., &c.

22 JY 69

MR. THRALE died in April, 1781—thus recorded in JOHNSON's diary:—"On Wednesday, the 11th April, was buried my dear friend, MR. THRALE, who died on Wednesday, the 4th, and with him were buried many of my hopes and pleasures. I felt almost the last flutter of his pulse, and looked for the last time on the face which had never been turned upon me but with respect and benignity." JOHNSON left *Streatham* for ever in 1782, and carried MRS. THRALE altogether on her marrying (as successor to such a man as MR. THRALE) the music master PROZZI. MR. THRALE left three daughters, the subject of this notice surviving them all, and he also left £135,000 behind him, to provide for them amply. His widow had an annuity of £4,000, and lived every other year a *Penzance*, in *Cornwall*, on about £250 per annum, living the intervening years in great splendour on the £7,750 (the accumulation of two years) in the gay city of *Bath*, where the writer of this little detail saw her open a ball, which she gave to celebrate her eighty-first birthday.

The late MISS THRALE had passed her eighty-eighth birthday and died on the 5th instant, at her cottage in *Knockholt*, near *Seven Oaks*, where she had resided upwards of fifty years. She was buried at *Streatham* on the 13th instant, in the churchyard (the family vault being closed against her by the Act), and her funeral was attended by the Trustees and Executors, BERTIE MOSTYN Esq., and the Honourable Mrs. VILLIERS (LADY KEITH's only daughter), as chief mourners, and also by the REV. THOMAS HARMAN, the REV. J. HALL, Mr. J. P. ATKINS, Mr. WORSHIP (the Doctor), and Mr. COLE (the family Solicitor).

Probably the most interesting part of the recital remains to be told. DR. JOHNSON was one of MR. THRALE's executors, and personally superintended taking stock of the brewhouse, when it was purchased by BARCLAY (of the family of BARCLAY, of *Ury*, the famous member of which walked the 1,000 miles in the 1,000 hours) and PERKINS (who had long been MR. THRALE's superintendent of the business), of whom the present firm are direct relatives. This is all curious enough; but the reader must know something still more so. *Hamlet* says—

"Alexander died, Alexander was buried, Alexander returneth into dust—the earth is dust; of the earth we make loam, and whither of that earth whereto he was converted might they not stop a beer barrel?"

Now this grand piece of moral philosophy was often and often delivered on the boards of the *Globe Theatre* (of which SHAKESPEARE

was part proprietor); and as the ground on which that theatre stood is actually occupied at this moment by the brewhouse of BARCLAY and PERKINS, why may not the said "earth" have stopped some thousands of beer barrels?

It was, with reference to this singular circumstance, that MR. BUNN, in delivering one of his lectures on SHAKESPEARE, introduced this paraphrase:—

To think, where SHAKESPEARE food found for the mind,
Food for the body now-a-days they find;
And what will make it more absurd appear,
Where they drew houses then, they now draw beer!!!

22 JY 69



M^{rs} Thrale

London: Henry Colburn, Publisher, Great Marlborough St 1842.

L E T T E R S

TO AND FROM THE LATE

Samuel Johnson, LL.D.

TO WHICH ARE ADDED

S O M E P O E M S

NEVER BEFORE PRINTED.

PUBLISHED

FROM THE ORIGINAL MSS. IN HER POSSESSION,
By HESTER LYNCH PIOZZI.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

L O N D O N:

Printed for A. STRAHAN; and T. CADELL, in the Strand.

MDCCCLXXXVIII.



C O N T E N T S.

xi

LETTER	Page
Anecdotes of Dr. Johnson —	378
CCCLV. Dr. Johnson to Miss Boothby	391
CCCLVI. — to the Same, on his illness	392
CCCLVII. — to the Same —	393
CCCLVIII. — to the Same—reflexions on his illness—the report of his death	396
CCCLIX. — to the Same —	399
CCCLX. — to the Same — —	400
CCCLXI. — to Miss * * * * —	ib.
CCCLXII. — to J — S — Esq. on the state of his affairs and his father's improper conduct — —	402
CCCLXIII. — to Mr. Saftres, on his Dictionary	405
CCCLXIV. — to the Same —	407
CCCLXV. — to the Same — —	409
CCCLXVI. — to the Same —	410
CCCLXVII. — to the Same — —	412

P O E M S.

Verses addressed to Dr. Lawrence, composed by Dr.

Johnson as he lay confined with an inflamed Eye	415
Translation by Mrs. Piozzi —	416
Boethius, Book II. Metre 2, translated —	418
——, Book II. Metre 4 —	419
——, Book III. Metre 1 — —	420
——, Book III. Metre 3 —	ib.
——, Book III. Metre 4 — —	421
——, Book III. Metre 5 —	ib.
——, Book III. Metre 6 — —	422
——, Book III. Metre 12 —	423

C O N T E N T S

O F T H E

S E C O N D V O L U M E.

LETTER	1777.	Page
CLXXXIII.	Dr. Johnson to Mrs. Thrale, from Ashbourne — —	1
CLXXXIV.	— to the Same —	4
CLXXXV.	— to the Same —	6
CLXXXVI.	— to the Same — —	8
CLXXXVII.	— to the Same, from Lichfield	10
CLXXXVIII.	— to the Same —	12
CLXXXIX.	— to the Same, on letter-writing	14
CXC.	— to the Same —	16
	1778.	
CXCI.	— to the Same —	18
CXCII.	— to the Same—print of Mrs. Montague—he fits for his picture—on Mr. Thrale's illness —	20
CXCIII.	— to the Same, on Mr. Thrale's prosperity — —	24
CXCIV.	— to the Same —	26
CXCV.	— to the Same — —	28

A 2

CXCVI.

LETTER	1778.	Page
CXCVI.	Mrs. Thrale to Dr. Johnson—comparison between Richardson's and Fielding's novels—remarks on the seasons at Brighton	30
CXCVII.	Dr. Johnson to Mrs. Thrale	37
CXCVIII.	— to the Same	40
	1779.	
CXCIX.	— to the Same, on his presenting his Lives of the Poets to the King	42
CC.	— to the Same	43
CCI.	— to the Same	44
CCII.	— to the Same—journal of a week at Lichfield	45
CCIII.	— to the Same, on Mr. Thrale's illness	47
CCIV.	— to the Same, on the same subject	49
CCV.	— to the Same, on the same subject	51
CCVI.	— to the Same, on the same subject	52
CCVII.	— to Mr. Thrale, recommending cheerfulness and exercise	54
CCVIII.	— to Mrs. Thrale, on Mr. Thrale's illness	55
CCIX.	— to Mr. Thrale, congratulating him upon his recovery	57
CCX.	— to Mrs. Thrale	58
CCXI.	— to the Same	60
CCXII.	— to the Same, on his illness	61
CCXIII.	— to the Same	63
CCXIV.	— to the Same	64
CCXV.	— to the Same	67
CCXVI.	— to the Same	70
CCXVII.	— to the Same	72
CCXVIII.	— to the Same	74
CCXIX.	— to the Same	76
CCXX.	— to the Same	78
CCXXI.	— to the Same	81
	CCXXII.	

C O N T E N T S. v

LETTER	1779.	Page
ccxxii.	Mrs. Thrale to Dr. Johnson—answer to the foregoing—story of Mr. Honeywood—her apprehensions of Mr. Thrale's danger —	84
ccxxiii.	Dr. Johnson to Mrs. Thrale, on the ease with which trade is carried on	90
ccxxiv.	— to the Same —	94
ccxxv.	— to the Same, at Bath —	95
	1780.	
ccxxvi.	— to the Same —	98
ccxxvii.	— to the Same — —	102
ccxxviii.	— to the Same —	104
ccxxix.	— to the Same—Southwark election—his engagements—on the Bath waters — —	106
ccxxx.	— to the Same, on criticism—he has a contest of gallantry with Mrs. B.—the exhibition in 1780	109
ccxxxi.	— to the Same, persuading her to come to town on account of the Southwark election —	112
ccxxxii.	— to the Same, on the same subject	114
ccxxxiii.	Mrs. Thrale to Dr. Johnson—on the Southwark election—on Methodism—on his Life of Blackmore	116
ccxxxiv.	Dr. Johnson to Mrs. Thrale—Southwark election—the Lives of the Poets	124
ccxxxv.	— to the Same —	127
ccxxxvi.	Mrs. Thrale to Dr. Johnson, from Bath	129
ccxxxvii.	Dr. Johnson to Mrs. Thrale —	135
ccxxxviii.	— to Mr. Thrale —	139
ccxxxix.	— to Mrs. Thrale —	141
ccxl.	— to the Same, account of the riots	143
	A 3	ccxli,

LETTER	1780.	Page
CCXLI.	Mrs. Thrale to Dr. Johnson, from Bath —account of the riots there	146
CCXLII.	Dr. Johnson to Mrs. Thrale—suppression of the riots —	152
CCXLIII.	— to the Same—same subject—Mr. Wilkes's zeal —	154
CCXLIV.	— to the Same—same subject	158
CCXLV.	— to the Same—same subject	159
CCXLVI.	— to the Same —	162
CCXLVII.	— to the Same — —	164
CCXLVIII.	— to the Same—that men should fol- low their genius —	166
CCXLIX.	— to the Same — —	169
CCL.	— to the Same —	172
CCLI.	— to the Same — —	174
CCLII.	— to the Same, on his age	176
CCLIII.	— to the Same — —	179
CCLIV.	Mrs. Thrale to Dr. Johnson, on his Lives of the Poets —	180
CCLV.	Dr. Johnson to Mrs. Thrale, on Mr. Thrale's illness — —	185
CCLVI.	— to the Same, on the same subject	189
	1781.	
CCLVII.	— to the Same, on Mr. Thrale's death — —	191
CCLVIII.	— to the Same, on the same subject	193
CCLIX.	— to the Same, on the same subject	195
CCLX.	— to the Same, on the same subject	196
CCLXI.	— to the Same, on the same subject	198
CCLXII.	— to the Same, on the same subject	199
CCLXIII.	— to the Same —	200
CCLXIV.	— to the Same — —	202
CCLXV.	— to the Same, from Oxford	204
	CCLXVI.	

C O N T E N T S.

vii

LETTER	1781.	Page
CCLXVI.	Dr. Johnson to Mrs. Thrale, from Lichfield —	205
CCLXVII.	— to the Same —	206
CCLXVIII.	— to the Same — —	208
CCLXIX.	— to the Same —	210
CCLXX.	Mrs. Thrale to Dr. Johnson	212
CCLXXI.	Dr. Johnson to Mrs. Thrale	219
CCLXXII.	— to the Same, from Ashbourne	221
CCLXXIII.	— to the Same —	222
CCLXXIV.	— to the Same — —	224
CCLXXV.	— to the Same —	226
CCLXXVI.	— to the Same — —	228
CCLXXVII.	— to the Same —	229
	1782.	
CCLXXVIII.	— to the Same — —	231
CCLXXIX.	Mrs. Thrale to Dr. Johnson	232
CCLXXX.	Dr. Johnson to Mrs. Thrale	235
CCLXXXI.	— to the Same —	ib.
CCLXXXII.	— to the Same — —	236
CCLXXXIII.	— to the Same —	237
CCLXXXIV.	— to the Same — —	238
CCLXXXV.	— to the Same, on his illness	240
CCLXXXVI.	— to the Same, on the same subject	241
CCLXXXVII.	— to the Same, from Oxford	243
CCLXXXVIII.	— to the Same —	244
CCLXXXIX.	Mrs. Thrale to Dr. Johnson	245
CCXC.	Dr. Johnson to Mrs. Thrale, from Oxford — —	249
CCXCI.	— to the Same —	250
CCXCII.	— to the Same — —	251
CCXCIII.	— to the Same —	252
	1783.	
CCXCIV.	Mrs. Thrale to Dr. Johnson, on the illness of one of her daughters	253
	CCXCV.	

LETTER	1783.	Page
CCXCV.	Dr. Johnson to Mrs. Thrale, on the same subject—he dines at the academy—Barry's exhibition opened	255
CCXCVI.	— to the Same, on the state of his health—few friends left in his neighbourhood — —	257
CCXCVII.	— to the Same — —	259
CCXCVIII.	— to the Same, from Oxford	261
CCXCIX.	— to the Same, on the employment of time — —	262
CCC.	Mrs. Thrale to Dr. Johnson, on the same subject — —	264
CCCI.	Dr. Johnson to Mrs. Thrale, written the morning after he had lost his speech by a paralytick stroke—describes his situation during the night of his seizure	268
CCCII.	— to the Same—diary of his health	273
CCCIII.	— to the Same, on the same subject	275
CCCIV.	— to the Same, on the same subject	277
CCCV.	— to the Same, on the same subject	278
CCCVI.	— to the Same—laments his solitude from the loss of his neighbours	280
CCCVII.	— to the Same—description of a remarkable burning glass —	282
CCCVIII.	— to the Same — —	284
CCCIX.	— to the Same —	286
CCCX.	— to the Same—his physicians—on an imitation of his style —	288
CCCXI.	— to Miss Susanna Thrale, on the common course of life —	290
CCCXII.	— to Mrs. Thrale —	292
CCCXIII.	— to the Same — —	294
CCCXIV.	— to Miss Sophia Thrale, on the science of arithmetick —	295
CCCXV.		

C O N T E N T S.

ix

LETTER	1783.	Page
cccxv.	Dr. Johnson to Miss Susanna Thrale, on gluttony — —	297
cccxvi.	— to Mrs. Thrale —	299
cccxvii.	— to the Same, on Mrs. Williams's illness — —	301
cccxviii.	— to the Same —	303
cccxi.	Mrs. Thrale to Dr. Johnson	305
cccxx.	Dr. Johnson to Miss Susanna Thrale — use of travelling—account of Mrs. Williams's death —	308
cccxxi.	— to Mrs. Thrale, on air ballons— character of Mrs. Williams	310
cccxxii.	— to the Same, on his illness—cause of the fall of the stocks —	313
cccxxiii.	— to the Same—his opinion of Stone- henge — —	315
cccxxiv.	— to the Same, on his illness—ac- count of Mrs. Porter the tragedian	318
cccxxv.	— to the Same, on the state of his health—he receives visits from Mrs. Siddons and Mr. Kemble	320
cccxxvi.	— to the Same—robbery of her house in the Borough—air ballons	323
cccxxvii.	— the Same, on friendships of long continuance — —	325
cccxxviii.	— to Miss S. A. Thrale, on the Tat- lers—the generosity of one of his friends — —	327
cccxxix.	— to Mrs. Thrale, on the illness of one of her daughters —	329
cccxxx.	— to the Same, on the same subject	331
cccxxxi.	— to the Same, on the same subject	332
cccxxxii.	— to the Same, on the same subject	334
cccxxxiii.	Mrs. Thrale to Dr. Johnson, on the same subject —	335
	6	cccxxxiv.

LETTER	1783.	Page
CCCXXXIV.	Dr. Johnson to Mrs. Thrale	339
CCCXXXV.	— to the Same —	340
CCCXXXVI.	— to the Same — —	342
	1784.	
CCCXXXVII.	— to the Same, on his state of health, and air ballons —	344
CCCXXXVIII.	— to the Same — —	346
CCCXXXIX.	— to the Same, on his illness—the Rambler translated into Russian	348
CCCXL.	— to the Same, on confidence with respect to futurity —	350
CCCXLI.	— to the Same, on his recovery— he ceases to take opium —	352
CCCXLII.	— to the Same, on his state of health	354
CCCXLIII.	— to Miss Susanna Thrale, on Mr. Herschel's telescope —	356
CCCXLIV.	Mrs. Thrale to Dr. Johnson	358
CCCXLV.	Dr. Johnson to Mrs. Thrale, on his propensity to luxury during his ill- ness — —	361
CCCXLVI.	— to the Same, on the revival of his club—Miss Moore's Bas Bleu	363
CCCXLVII.	— to the Same, on his recovery	365
CCCXLVIII.	— to the Same—he goes to the ex- hibition—Mr. Howard visits him	367
CCCXLIX.	— to the Same —	369
CCCL.	— to the Same — —	370
CCCLI.	— to the Same —	372
CCCLII.	— to the Same—his reception of Mr. Lysons — death of Mr. Macbean	373
CCCLIII.	Mrs. Piozzi to Dr. Johnson, on her marriage — —	374
CCCLIV.	Dr. Johnson to Mrs. Piozzi, on the same subject —	375
		Anecdotes

L E T T E R S

TO AND FROM

Samuel Johnson, LL.D.

L E T T E R CLXXXIII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM, Ashbourne, October 6, 1777.

YOU are glad that I am absent; and I am glad that you are sick. When you went away, what did you do with your aunt? I am glad she liked my Sufy; I was always a Sufy, when nobody else was a Sufy. How have you managed at your new place? Could you all get lodgings in one house, and meat at one table? Let me hear the whole series of misery; for, as Dr. Young says, *I love horreur.*

VOL. II.

B

Me-

2 LETTERS TO AND FROM

Methinks you are now a great way off; and if I come, I have a great way to come to you; and then the sea is so cold, and the rooms are so dull; yet I do love to hear the sea roar and my mistress talk—For when she talks, ye gods! how she will talk. I wish I were with you, but we are now near half the length of England asunder. It is frightful to think how much time must pass between writing this letter and receiving an answer, if any answer were necessary.

She would often tell lies, and he quarrelled with her almost every day about it.

Taylor is now going to have a ram; and then, after Aries and Taurus, we shall have Gemini. His oats are now in the wet; here is a deal of rain. Mr. Langdon bought, at Nottingham fair, fifteen tun of cheese; which, at an ounce a-piece, will suffice after dinner for four hundred and eighty thousand men. This is all the news that the place affords. I purpose soon to be at Lichfield, but know not just when, having been defeated of my first design. When I come to town, I am to be very busy about my Lives.—Could not you do some of them for me?

I am glad Master unspelled you, and run you all on rocks, and drove you about, and
made

DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON. 3

made you stir. Never be cross about it. Quiet and calmness you have enough of—a little hurry stirs life—and,

Brushing o'er, adds motion to the pool.

DRYDEN.

Now *pool* brings my master's excavations into my head. I wonder how I shall like them; I should like not to see them, till we all see them together. He will have no waterfall to roar like the Doctor's. I sat by it yesterday, and read Erasmus's *Militis Christiani Enchiridion*. Have you got that book?

Make my compliments to dear Queeney. I suppose she will dance at the Rooms; and your heart will go one knows not how.

I am, dearest, and dearest Lady,

Your most humble servant,

SAM. JOHNSON.

LETTER CLXXXIV.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

October 10, 1777.

A^ND so, supposing that I might come to town and neglect to give you notice, or thinking some other strange thought, but certainly thinking wrong, you fall to writing about me to Tom Davies, as if he could tell you any thing that I would not have you know. As soon as I came hither, I let you know of my arrival; and the consequence is, that I am summoned to Brighthelmstone through storms, and cold, and dirt, and all the hardships of wintry journies. You know my natural dread of all those evils; yet to shew my master an example of compliance, and to let you know how much I long to see you, and to boast how little I give way to disease, my purpose is to be with you on Friday.

I am sorry for poor Nezzy, and hope she will in time be better; I hope the same for myself. The rejuvenescency of Mr. Scrase gives us both reason to hope, and therefore
both

both of us rejoice in his recovery. I wish him well besides, as a friend to my master.

I am just come home from not seeing my Lord Mayor's shew, but I might have seen at least part of it. But I saw Miss Wesley and her brothers; she sends her compliments. Mrs. Williams is come home, I think a very little better.

Every body was an enemy to that wig.— *Madam wore a wig during many years in conformity with the Jew-woman, having a great notion, that in time the Jews will be again the great favorites of God: But about this time she fell acquainted with Piorri, who disliked a shaven girl in a woman, and that drew out of her all her Jewish notions.*
 We will burn it, and get drunk; for what is joy without drink. Wagers are laid in the city about our success, which is yet, as the French call it, problematical. Well, but seriously I think I shall be glad to see you in your own hair; but do not take too much time in combing, and twisting, and papering, and unpapering, and curling, and frizzing, and powdering, and getting out the powder, with all the other operations required in the cultivation of a head of hair; yet let it be combed at least once in three months, on the quarter-day—I could wish it might be combed once at least in six weeks; if I were to indulge my wishes, but what are wishes without hopes, I should fancy the operation performed—one knows not when one has enough—perhaps every morning.

I am, dearest Lady,

Your, &c.

LETTER CLXXXV.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

October 13, 1777.

YET I do love to hear from you. Such pretty kind letters as you send. But it gives me great delight to find that my master misses me. I begin to wish myself with you more than I should do, if I were wanted less. It is a good thing to stay away till one's company is desired, but not so good to stay after it is desired.

You know I have some work to do. I did not set to it very soon; and if I should go up to London with nothing done, what would be said, but that I was——who can tell what? I therefore stay till I can bring up something to stop their mouths, and then——

Though I am still at Ashbourne, I receive your dear letters that come to Lichfield, and you continue that direction, for I think to get thither as soon as I can.

One

DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON. 7

One of the does died yesterday, and I am afraid her fawn will be starved; I wish Miss Thrale had it to nurse; but the Doctor is now all for cattle, and minds very little either does or hens.

How did you and your aunt part? Did you turn her out of doors to begin your journey? or did she leave you by her usual shortness of visits? I love to know how you go on.

I cannot but think on your kindness and my master's. Life has, upon the whole, fallen short, very short, of my early expectation; but the acquisition of such a friendship, at an age when new friendships are seldom acquired, *He owed it to her* is something better than the general course of *vanity and strong* things gives man a right to expect. *desire of literary* I think *fame: but when* on it with great delight, I am not very apt to *the love of a* be delighted. *bartering - I am* *succeeded, her* *friendship cooled,* *and ended soon.*

I am, &c.

LETTER CLXXXVI.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAREST LADY, Ashbourne, Oct. 16, 1777.

I AM just going out, and can write but little. How you should be long without a letter I know not, for I seldom miss a post. I purpose now to come to London as soon as I can, for I have a deal to look after, but hope I shall get through the whole business.

I wish you had told me your adventure, or told me nothing. Be civil to Lord * * * *, he seems to be a good kind of man. Miss may change her mind; and will change it, when she finds herself get more credit by dancing than by whist; and though she should continue to like, as she likes now, the harm is none.

Do not yet begin, dear Madam, to think about *the last*. You may well dance these dozen years, if you keep your looks as you have

*Miss Thrale never
could be brought
to love dancing.*

DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON. 9

have yet kept them; and I am glad that Hetty has no design to dance you down.

The poor P——. I am sorry for the girl; she seems to be doomed, before her time, to weakness and solicitude. What is that Bed-rider the supervisor? He will be up again. But life seems to be closing upon them.

I hope you still continue to be sick, and my dear master to be well.

I am no sencer of compliments, but take them once for all, and deliver them to be kept as rarities by Miss Owen, Mrs. Nesbit, Miss Hetty, and Dr. Burney.

Still direct to Lichfield, for thither I am hastening; and from Lichfield to London, and from London I hope to Brighthelmstone, and from Brighthelmstone *qua terra patet*.

I am, dearest of all dear Ladies,

Your, &c.

LETTER CLXXXVII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM, Lichfield, October 22, 1777.

I AM come, at last, to Lichfield, and am really glad that I am got away from a place where there was indeed no evil, but very little good. You may, I believe, write once to Lichfield after you receive this, but after that it will be best to direct to London.

Your throat is, I suppose, well by this time. Poor Mrs. * * * * it is impossible to think on without great compassion.—Against a blow so sudden, and so unexpected, I wonder that she supports herself. The consolations of * * * * 's girls must indeed be painful. She had intended to enjoy the triumph of her daughter's superiority. They were prepared to wish them both ill, and their wishes are gratified. There is in this event a kind of system of calamity, or conflagration of the soul. Every avenue of pain is invaded at once.—Pride is mortified, tenderness is wounded, hope

is disappointed,—Whither will the poor Lady run from herself?

My visit to Stowhill has been paid. I have seen there a collection of misery. Mrs. Aston paralytick, Mrs. Walmfley lame, Mrs. Hervey blind, and I think another lady deaf. Even such is life.

I hope dear Mrs. Aston is a little better; it is however very little. She was, I believe, glad to see me; and to have any body glad to see me is a great pleasure.

I will tell, while I think on it, that I really saw with my own eyes Mr. Chaplin of Lincolnshire's letter for Taylor's cow, accompanied with a draught on Hoare for one hundred and twenty-six pounds to pay for her. Frank says, the young bull is not quite so big as the old one; Taylor, I think, says he is bigger.

I have seen but one new place this journey, and that is Leek in the Morlands.—An old church, but a poor town.

The days grow short, and we have frosts; but I am in all weathers, Madam,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R CLXXXVIII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

Lichfield, October 25, 1777.

*M^r. Cholmondley's
running away from
his creditors.*

CHOLMONDELY's story shocks me, if it be true, which I can hardly think, for I am utterly unconscious of it; I am very sorry, and very much ashamed.

*She might have
spared this para-
graph, but it
must give pain
to Mrs. Cholmondley,
and that she will
always be glad
to do, because
Johnson had a
great value for
her.*

I am here for about a week longer, and then I purpose to hasten to London. How long do you stay at Brighthelmstone? Now the company is gone, why should you be the lag? The season of brewing will soon be here, if it is not already come. We have here cold weather, and loud winds.

Miss Porter is better than is usual, and Mrs. Aston is, I hope, not worse, but she is very bad; and being, I fancy, about sixty-eight, is it likely that she will ever be better?

It is really now a long time that we have been writing and writing, and yet how small a part of our minds have we written? We shall meet, I hope, soon, and talk it out.

You

You are not yet sixty-eight, but it will come, and perhaps you may then sometimes remember me.

In the mean time, do not think to be young beyond the time; do not play Agnes; and do not grow old before your time, nor suffer yourself to be too soon driven from the stage. You can yet give pleasure by your appearance; show yourself therefore, and be pleased by pleasing. It is not now too soon to be wife; nor is it yet too late to be gay.

She was fond of that, and I wonder how Johnson could venture upon such a stroke, that he ought to have known would mightily offend her. It is true he suppresses the matter a little in the next lines; but still, the blow must have proved offensive.

Streatham is now, I suppose, the eighth wonder of the world; I long to see it, but do not intend to go till, as I once said before, my master, and you, and I, and nobody else shall be with us—perambulate it together.

Cicely, I warrant you, will do well enough. I am glad you are so sick, and nobody to pity. Now for another pretty little girl.—But we know not what is best.

I am, dearest Lady,

Your, &c.

P. S. Pay my respects to Miss Owen.

LETTER CLXXXIX.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM, Lichfield, October 27, 1777.

YOU talk of writing and writing, as if you had all the writing to yourself. If our correspondence were printed, I am sure posterity, for posterity is always the authour's favourite; would say that I am a good writer too.—*Anch'io sono pittore.* To sit down so often with nothing to say; to say something so often, almost without consciousness of saying, and without any remembrance of having said, is a power of which I will not violate my modesty by boasting; but I do not believe that every body has it.

Some, when they write to their friends, are all affection; some are wise and sententious; some strain their powers for efforts of gaiety; some write news, and some write secrets; but to make a letter without affection, without wisdom, without gaiety, without news, and without a secret, is, doubtless, the great epistolick art.

In a man's letters, you know, Madam, his soul lies naked, his letters are only the mirror

rouer of his breast; whatever passes within him is shown undisguised in its natural process; nothing is inverted, nothing distorted; you see systems in their elements; you discover actions in their motives.

Of this great truth, founded by the knowing to the ignorant, and so echoed by the ignorant to the knowing, what evidence have you now before you? Is not my soul laid open in these veracious pages? Do not you see me reduced to my first principles? This is the pleasure of corresponding with a friend, where doubt and distrust have no place, and every thing is said as it is thought. The original idea is laid down in its simple purity, and all the supervenient conceptions are spread over it *stratum super stratum*, as they happen to be formed. These are the letters by which souls are united, and by which minds naturally in unison move each other as they are moved themselves. I know, dearest Lady, that in the perusal of this, such is the consanguinity of our intellects, you will be touched as I am touched. I have indeed concealed nothing from you, nor do I expect ever to repent of having thus opened my heart.

I am, &c.

He had no distrust then, that his letters would on a future day be sold for five hundred pounds to gratify her and a singing-master's avarice.

how well he knew her!

Had he then suspected what would happen, his heart would have been left open.

L E T T E R CXC.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM, Lichfield, October 29, 1777.

THOUGH after my last letter I might justly claim an interval of rest, yet I write again to tell you, that for this turn you will hear but once more from Lichfield. This day is Wednesday, on Saturday I shall write again, and on Monday I shall set out to seek adventures; for you know,

None but the brave deserve the fair.

On Monday we hope to see Birmingham, the seat of the mechanick arts; and know not whether our next stage will be Oxford, the mansion of the liberal arts; or London, the residence of all the arts together. The chymists call the world *Academia Paracelsi*; my ambition is to be his fellow-student—to see the works of nature, and hear the lectures of truth. To London therefore—London may perhaps

perhaps fill me ; and I hope to fill my part of London.

In the mean time, let me continue to keep the part which I have had so long in your kindness, and my master's ; for if that should grow less, I know not where to find that which may supply the diminution. But I hope what I have been so happy as to gain I shall have the happiness of keeping.

I always omitted to tell you that Lucy's maid took the worm-powder with strict regularity, but with no great effect. Lucy has had several letters from you, but cannot prevail on herself to write ; but she is very grateful.

Mrs. Walmfley has been at Stowhill, and has invited me, when I come to Bath, to be at her house. Poor Mrs. Aston either mends not at all, or not perceptibly ; but she does not seem to grow worse.

I suppose * * * * * is by this time recovered, and perhaps grown wiser, than to shake his constitution so violently a second time.

I suppose he began to have some little suspicion of her lagging in friendship, as she began then her acquaintance with Ricci: yet his natural pride keeps him from guessing at the true cause of her lagging.

18 LETTERS TO AND FROM

Poor Mrs. * * * * ! One cannot think on her but with great compassion. But it is impossible for her husband's daughters not to triumph; and the husband will feel, as Rochefoucault says, *something that does not displease him*. You and I, who are neutral, whom her happiness could not have depressed, may be honestly sorry.

I am, dear Madam,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R CXCI.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

April 30, 1778.

SINCE I was fetched away from Streatham, the journal stands thus :

Saturday.—Sir J. R. *Sir Joshua Reynolds.*

Sunday.—Mr. Hoole.

Monday.—Lord Lucan.

Tuesday.

Tuesday.—Gen. Paoli.

Wednesday.—Mr. Ramfay.

Thursday.—Old Bailey.

Friday.—Club.

Saturday.—Sir J. R.

Sunday.—Lady Lucan.

Monday.—Pray let it be Streatham, and very early; do now let it be very early. For I may be carried away—just like Ganymede of Troy.

I hope my master grows well, and my mistress continues bad. I am afraid the ladies will be gone, and I shall say,

She's gone, and never knew how much I lov'd her.

Do now let me know whether you will send for me—early—on Monday. But take some care, or your letter will not come till Tuesday.

I am, dearest Lady,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R C X C I I .

T o M r s . T H R A L E .

D E A R E S T M A D A M ,

O c t o b e r 15, 1778.

YO U that are among all the wits, delighting and delighted, have little need of entertainment from me, whom you left at home unregarded and unpitied, to shift in a world to which you have made me so much a stranger ; yet I know you will pretend to be angry if I do not write a letter, which, when you know the hand, you will perhaps lay aside to be read when you are dressing to-morrow ; and which, when you have read it, if that time ever comes, you will throw away into the drawer and say—stuff !

As to Dr. Collier's epitaph, Nollkens has had it so long, that I have forgotten how long. You never had it. So you may set the S——s at defiance.

There

There is a print of Mrs. Montague, and I shall think myself very ill rewarded for my love and admiration if she does not give me one; she will give it nobody in whom it will excite more respectful sentiments. But I never could get any thing from her but by pushing a face; and so, if you please, you may tell her.

I hope you let Miss S—— know how safe you keep her book. It was too fine for a scholar's talons. I hope she gets books that she may handle with more freedom, and understand with less difficulty. Do not let her forget me.

When I called the other day at Burney's, I found only the young ones at home; at last came the Doctor and Madam, from a dinner in the country, to tell how they had been robbed as they returned. The Doctor saved his purse, but gave them three guineas and some silver, of which they returned him three-and-sixpence, unasked, to pay the turnpike.

I have sat twice to Sir Joshua, and he seems to like his own performance. He has

projected another, in which I am to be busy; but we can think on it at leisure.

Mrs. Williams is come home better, and the habitation is all concord and harmony; only Mr. Levet harbours discontent.

With Dr. Lawrence's consent, I have, for the two last nights, taken musk; the first night was a worse night than common, the second a better, but not so much better as that I dare ascribe any virtue to the medicine. I took a scruple each time.

Now Miss has seen the camp, I think she should write me some account of it. A camp, however familiarly we may speak of it, is one of the great scenes of human life. War and peace divide the business of the world. Camps are the habitations of those who conquer kingdoms, or defend them.

But what are wits, and pictures, and camps, and physick? There is still a nearer concern to most of us.—Is my master come to himself? Does he talk, and walk, and look about him, as if there were yet something in the world for which it is worth while to live? Or does he yet sit and say nothing? He was mending

*The poor man could
never subdue his grief
on account of his
son's death.*

mending before he went, and surely he has not relapsed. To grieve for evils is often wrong ; but it is much more wrong to grieve without them. All sorrow that lasts longer than its cause is morbid, and should be shaken off as an attack of melancholy, as the forerunner of a greater evil than poverty or pain.

I never said with Dr. Dodd that *I love to prattle upon paper*, but I have prattled now till the paper will not hold much more than my good wishes, which I sincerely send you.

I am, &c.

LETTER CXCH.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAREST LADY, London, October 24, 1778.

Miss Thrale refused to give up that and some other letters the Doctor wrote her when her mother applied to her for them.

She was by this time in love with her Daughter's singing-master, and growing humoursome; but the Doctor could not guess at the cause of it.

I HAVE written Miss such a long letter, that I cannot tell how soon I shall be weary of writing another, having made no new discoveries since my last, either in art or nature, which may not be kept till we see each other; and sure that time is not far off. The Duchess is a good Duchess for courting you while she stays, and for not staying to court you, till my courtship loses all its value. You are there as I would have you, except your humours. When my master grows well, must you take your turn to be melancholy? You appear to me to be now floating on the spring-tide of prosperity; on a tide not governed by the moon, but as the moon governs your heads; on a tide therefore which is never likely to ebb but by your own faults. I think it very probably in your power to lay up eight thousand pounds a-year for every year to

to come, encreasing all the time, what needs not be encreased, the splendour of all external appearance. And surely such a state is not to be put into yearly hazard for the pleasure of *keeping the house full, or the ambition of outbreuing Whitbread.* Stop now and you are safe—stop a few years and you may go safely on hereafter, if to go on shall seem worth the while. *which was Thrale's only ambition*

I am sorry for Mrs. * * * *; we never could make any thing of the lawyer, when we had him among us. * * * * has got some vanity in her head. Vanity always oversets a lady's judgment. I have not told, unless it be Williams, and I do not know that I have told her. If Streatfield has a little kindness for me, I am glad. I call now and then on the Burney's, where you are at the top of mortality.—When will you come home? *and that the poor fools never can find out.*

Two days ago Dr. Lawrence ordered a new medicine, which I think to try to-night, but my hopes are not high. I mean to try however, and not languish without resistance.

Young Desmoulines is taken in *an under-something* of Drury-lane; he knows not, I believe, his own denomination.

26 LETTERS TO AND FROM

My two clerical friends, Darby and Worthington, have both died this month. I have known Worthington long, and to die is dreadful. I believe he was a very good man.

I am, &c.

*why so? To die
is a good thing,
and God, who knows
better than Johnson,
orderd it to be
universal.*

LETTER CXCIV.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

October 31, 1778.

YOUR letter seemed very long a-coming, and was very welcome at last; do not be so long again.

Long live Sir John Shelly, that lures my master to hunt. I hope he will soon shake off the black dog, and come home as light as a feather. And long live Mrs. G——, that downs my mistress. I hope she will come home as flexible as a rush. I see my wish is rather ambiguous, it is to my mistress that I wish flexibility. As to the imitation imputed
to

to Mrs. G——, if she makes any thing like a copy, her powers of imitation are very great, for I do not remember that she ever saw me but once. If she copies me she will lose more credit by want of judgment than she will gain by quickness of apprehension.

Of Mrs. B—— I have no remembrance; perhaps her voice is low.

Miss * * * * is just gone from me. I told her how you took to them all; but told her likewise how you took to Miss * * * *. All poisons have their antidotes.

Sir Joshua has finished my picture, and it seems to please every body, but I shall wait to see how it pleases you.

Of your conditions of happiness, do not set your heart upon any, but what Providence puts in your own power. Your debts you may pay—much you may lay up. The rest you can only pray for. Of your daughters, three are out of the danger of children's distempers, the other two have hardly yet tried whether they can live or no. You ought not yet to count them among your settled possessions.

Is

Is it true that Mrs. D—— is *enceinte*?
It will give her great influence.

To-day Mrs. Williams and Mrs. Desmoulines had a scold, and Williams was going away, but I bid her *not turn tail*, and she came back, and rather got the upper hand.

I wish you would come back again to us all; you will find nobody among your fine ladies that will love you as you are loved by,

Dearest Lady,

Your, &c.

LETTER CXCIV.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

Nov. 9, 1778.

THE Lord Mayor has had a dismal day.—
Will not this weather drive you home? Perhaps you know not any body that will be glad to see you. I hope our well will yield water again, and something fuller you will find the pond; but then all the trees are naked, and the ground damp—but the year must go round.

While

While you are away I take great delight in your letters, only when you talk so much of obligations to me, you should consider how much you put me into the condition of *honest Joseph*.

Young Desmoulines thinks he has got something, he knows not what, at Drury-lane; his mother talks little of it.—Sure it is not a *bumm*? Mr. Levet, who thinks his ancient rights invaded, stands at bay, *fierce as ten furies*. Mrs. Williams growls and scolds, but Poll does not much flinch. Every body is in want. I shall be glad to see Streatham again, but I can find no reason for going to Bright-helmstone, but that of seeing my master and you three days sooner.

am, &c.

LETTER CXCVI.

Mrs. THRALE to Dr. JOHNSON.

Brighthelmstone, Nov. 11, 1778.

YOU are very kind, dear Sir, in wishing us at home, and we are very much obliged to you for all your good wishes, and all your good help towards our happiness; notwithstanding the worthy parallel you draw between yourself and *honest Joseph*. That letter in *Clarissa* was always a favourite of mine—'tis nature, 'tis truth, and what I delight in still more, 'tis general nature, not particular manners, that Richardson represents:—Honest Joseph, and Pamela's old father and mother, are translatable, not like Fielding's fat landladies, who all speak the Wiltshire dialect—*arrow* man, or *arrow* woman, instead of *e'er a man* and *e'er a woman*. Such minute attentions to things scarce worth attending to, are at best, excellencies of a meaner kind, and most worthy the partiality of him who collects Dutch paintings in preference

All this I am sure
she has gotten out
of the book in which
he registered what
Johnson spoke on
different occasions,
and when he gave
his opinion of this
and that book. All
this comes awkward
here, as Johnson's
letter did demand
nothing of this
parading stuff.

ference to the Italian school. But I dare not add another word on this subject, though you are a Richardsonian yourself.

With regard to coming home, *en lo que toca al rebusnar*, as Sancho says; I have leave to be explicit. Burney shall bring you on the 26th; so now we may talk about Richardson and Fielding if we will, or of any thing else *but* coming home; for did not wise Ulysses go to sleep as soon as he was within sight of his own country, which he had hunted no less than ten long years? And does not the Irishman, when at half the earth's diameter from his mistress, cry out, *Ab! my dear Sheelab O'Shalab, were I once within forty miles of those pretty eyes, I would never desire to be nearer them in all my life?* So why should not I, after fretting to come home ever since we came hither, though I never said so—why should not I, now the day is fixed—forget and think no more on't? That, says Mr. Johnson, is a bad place of which the best good thing is bad weather—yet that is true of Brighthelmstone this Autumn; and last week we had some storms that were very sublime. To see the ship how she fought, as

she ought to have written rebusnar.

the Clown says, and the sea how he flap-dragoned it, was a fine fight to us safely posted observers—*Suave mari magno*, &c.—And what are Mrs. Williams and Mrs. Desmoulines compared to the winds and the waves? There are horn lanterns (you remember) and paper lanterns, but what are they when opposed to the sun and the moon? Winter is coming on apace, that's certain; and it will be three months at least that we shall live without the sight of either leaf or blossom; we will try good fires and good humour, and make ourselves all the amends we can. I have lost more than Spring and Summer—I have lost what made my happiness in all seasons of the year; but the black dog shall not make prey of both my master and myself.—Much is gone—

She never was a prey to the black dog on account of poor Harry's death: but Mr. Thrale never could conquer his grief.

What then remains, but well what's left to use?
And keep good humour still, whate'er we lose.

The speech in this place is, how we escape the melancholy months that shew a decaying year, because there are no leaves to fall for-footh.—But don't you know April from November without trees? Methinks, wanting woods to tell the seasons, is as bad as wanting
a wea-

a weathercock to know which way the wind blows. Here is Mr. * * * * *, however who talks all about taste, and classics, and country customs, and rural sports, with rapture, which he perhaps fancies unaffected—was riding by our chaise on the Downs yesterday, and said, because the sun shone, that one could not perceive it was Autumn, for, says he, there is not one tree in sight to shew us the fall of the leaf; and hark! how that sweet bird sings, continued he, just like the first week in May. No, no, replied I, that's nothing but a poor robin-redbreast, whose chill wintry note tells the season too plainly, without assistance from the vegetable kingdom. Why, you amaze me, quoth our friend, I had no notion of *that*. Yet Mrs. * * * * * says, this man is a natural converser, and Mrs. * * * * * is an honourable lady.

My master is a good man, and a generous, he has made me some valuable presents here; and he swims now, and forgets the black dog.

Mr. Murphy is a man whose esteem every one must be proud of; I wrote to him about Evelina two days ago.

Mr. Scrafe is the comfort of our lives here. Driven from business by ill health, he concentrates his powers now to serve private friends. For true vigour of mind, for invincible attachment to those he has long loved, for penetration to find the right way, and spirit to pursue it, I have seen none exceed him. How much more valuable is such a character than that of a polite scholar, your belles lettres man, who would never have known that bees made honey, had not Virgil written his Georgicks?

Your visiting ticket has been left very completely in Wales. Was it the fashion to leave cards in Prior's time? I thought not—Yet he seems to allude to the custom, when he says, People

Should in life's visit leave their name;
And in the writing take great care
That all was full, and round, and fair.

The Welch, I once told you, would never be ungrateful—*a-propos*, I am not myself half grateful enough to Mr. Fitzmaurice, for his unfought and undeserved civilities towards me, concerning my old house and pictures in Wales.—Though you despise them, you do
not,

not, I am sure, despise me for desiring that he should be pleased. So now *do pray* help to discharge some of my debts of politeness, and write him a pretty letter on his son's birth—and get it finished, signed, sealed, and delivered at furthest—before the boy *comes of age, if you can*.

My friend * * * * is dying, sure enough; but dear Mrs. * * * * need be in no concern for *his* future state, on the same score she trembled for her husband's: do you remember how prettily she congratulated me that my mother would go to heaven, while poor —, says she, God knows what will become of *him!* *for if it were not for the Mayoril* he would never have known Christmas from Whitsuntide. Ah! dear Sir, and don't you think I prize you more, now I have lost my last surviving parent?—Such a parent!—Yes, yes—one may have twenty children, but *amor descendit*, it is by one's father and mother alone that one is loved. I, poor solitary wretch! have no regard now from any one, except what I can purchase by good behaviour, or flattery, or incessant fatigue of attention, and be worked at besides, sick or well, with intolerable diligence, or else I lose even

*I suppose Paozi
had about this time
quitted Brightelmstone*

36 LETTERS TO AND FROM

Sure, Pizzi was now gone. She dressed and danced, and was in love to boot; yet she was on the brink of folly.

you, whom I daily esteem more, as I see the virtue of some so diluted by folly, and the understanding of others so tainted by vice. I am now far from happy, yet I dress, and dance, and do my best to shew others how merry I am.—It is the Winter robin that twitters though, not the Summer throistle that sings.

She at last broke her word.

I long to come home, but wherever I am depend on my being ever,

DEAR SIR,

Your most obedient servant,

H. L. THRALE.

Mr. Scrafe gives us fine fruit; I wished you my pear yesterday, but then what would *one* pear have done for you?

LETTER CXCVII.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAREST MADAM, Nov. 14, 1778.

THEN I really think I shall be very glad to see you all safe at home. I shall easily forgive my master his long stay, if he leaves the dog behind him. We will watch, as well as we can, that the dog shall never be let in again, for when he comes the first thing he does is to worry my master. This time he gnawed him to the bone. Content, said Rider's almanack, makes a man richer than the Indies. But surely he that has the Indies in his possession, may without very much philosophy make himself content. So much for my master and his dog, a vile one it is, but I hope if he is not hanged he is drowned; with another lusty shake he will pick my master's heart out.

*and as long as he lived, poor fellow!
and killed him as
fast.*

and so it did.

I have begun to take valerian; the two last nights I took an ounce each night—a very loathsome quantity. Dr. Lawrence talked of a decoction, but I say, all or nothing. The

38 LETTERS TO AND FROM

first night I thought myself better, but the next it did me no good.

Young Desmoulines says, he is settled at a weekly pay of twenty-five shillings, about forty pounds a-year. Mr. Macbean has no business. We have tolerable concord at home, but no love. Williams hates every body. Levet hates Desmoulines, and does not love Williams. Desmoulines hates them both. Poll loves none of them.

Dr. Burney had the luck to go to Oxford the only week in the year when the library is shut up. He was however very kindly treated; as one man is translating Arabick, and another Welsh, for his service. Murphy told me that you wrote to him about Evelina. Francis wants to read it.

See how touchy was Johnson! He thought himself degraded by the phrase Burney shall bring you here on the 28th.

And on the 26th Burney is to bring me. Pray why so? Is it not as fit that I should bring Burney? My master is in his old lunes, and so am I. Well, I do not much care how it is, and yet—at it again.

Pray make my compliments to Mr. Scrase. He has many things which I wish to have, his knowledge of business and of the law. He has likewise a great chair. Such an one my
Master

Master talked of getting; but that vile black dog——

Mrs. Queeney might write to me, and do herself no harm; she will neglect me till I shall take to Sufy, and then Queeney may break her heart, and who can be blamed? I am sure I stuck to Queeney as long as I could.

Does not Master talk how full his canal will be when he comes home. Now or never. I know not how the foil was laid; if it slopes towards the canal, it may pour in a great deal of water, but I suspect it slopes the wrong way.

This is but the fourteenth day; there are twelve more to the twenty-sixth. Did you ever hear of notching a stick? however we have it in Horace—*truditur dies die*; as twelve days have gone, twelve days will come.

Hector of Birmingham just looked in at me. He is come to his only niece, who is ill of a cancer; I believe with very little hope, for it is knotted in two places.

I think at least I grow no worse; perhaps valerian may make me better. Let me have your prayers.

I am, dearest Lady,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R CXCVIII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

Nov. 21, 1778.

I WILL write to you once more before you come away; but—*nil mihi rescribas*—I hope soon to see you. Burney and I have settled it; and I will not take a post-chaise, merely to shew my independence.

Now the dog is drowned, I shall see both you and my master just as you are used to be, and with your being as you have been, your friends may very reasonably be satisfied.—Only, be better if you can.

Return my thanks, if you please, to Queeney for her letter. I do not yet design to leave her for Susy; but how near is the time when she will leave me, and leave me to Susy, or any body else that will pick me up.

———*Currit enim ferox
Ætas, et illi, quos tibi demserit,
Apponet annos.*———

Queeney,

Queeney, whom you watched while I held her, will soon think our care of her very superfluous.

Miss Biron, and, I suppose, Mrs. Biron, is gone. You are by this time left alone to wander over the Steine, and listen to the waves.—This is but a dull life. Come away and be busy, and count your poultry, and look into your dairy, and at leisure hours learn what revolutions have happened at Streatam.

I believe I told you that Jack Desmoulines is rated upon the book at Drury-lane five-and-twenty shillings a-week.

Baretti has told his musical scheme to B——, and B—— will neither grant the question nor deny. He is of opinion, that if it does not fail it will succeed, but if it does not succeed he conceives it must fail.

It is good to speak dubiously about futurity. It is likewise not amiss to hope.

Did I ever tell you that * * * * * was married? It so fell out, that * * * * * fell in love with a girl whose fortune was so small that he perhaps could not mention it to

Burney. The musical scheme was the Carman Seculare, that brought me a hundred and fifty pounds in three nights, and three times as much to Philidor, whom I got to set it to musick. It would have benefited us both [if Philidor had not proved a scoundrel] greatly more than those sums.

42 LETTERS TO AND FROM

his father ; but it happened likewise, by the lottery of love, that the father liked her so well, as himself to recommend her to * * * *. Such coincidence is rare.

Come now, do come home as fast as you can :

Come with a whoop, come with a call,
Come with a good will, or come not at all.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R CXCIX.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

March 10, 1779.

AND so, dear Madam, it is a mumm to see who will speak first. I will come to see you on Saturday, only let me know whether I must come to the Borough, or am to be taken up here.

Baretti's golden dream is now but silver. He is of my mind ; he says, there is no money for diversions. But we make another

other onset on Friday, and this is to be the last time this season.

I got my Lives, not yet quite printed, put neatly together, and sent them to the King; what he says of them I know not. If the King is a Whig, he will not like them; but is any king a Whig?

So far had I gone, when in came Mr. Thrale, who will have the honour of bringing it.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R C C.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

March 18, 1779.

THERE is some comfort in writing, when such praise is to be had. Plato is a multitude.

On Monday I came late to Mrs. Vesey. Mrs. Montague was there; I called for the print, and got good words. The evening was not brilliant, but I had thanks for my company.

44 LETTERS TO AND FROM

pany. The night was troublesome. On Tuesday I fasted, and went to the Doctor: he ordered bleeding. On Wednesday I had the teapot, fasted, and was blooded. Wednesday night was better. To-day I have dined at Mr. Strahan's at Islington, with his new wife. To-night there will be opium. To-morrow the teapot. Then heigh for Saturday. I wish the Doctor would bleed me again. Yet every body that I meet says that I look better than when I was last met.

I am, dearest Lady,

Your, &c.

LETTER CCI.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

May 20, 1779.

THE vicissitudes of things, and the eddies of life, are now carrying you southward, and me northward. When shall we meet again?

I must beg of you to send Mr. Watson's papers to my house, directed for him, and
sealed

DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON. 45

sealed up. I know not whether he does not think himself in danger of piracy.

Take care that Sufy fees all that Sophy has seen, that she may tell her travels, and give them a taste of the world. And take care, and write to me very often, till we meet again; and keep Master in good thoughts of me.—*Vale.*

L E T T E R CCII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

MADAM,

Lichfield, May 29, 1779.

I HAVE now been here a week, and will try to give you my journal, or such parts of it as are fit in my mind for communication.

On Friday.—We fet out about twelve, and lay at Daventry.

On Saturday.—We dined with Mr. Rann at Coventry. He intercepted us at the town's end. I saw Tom Johnson, who had hardly life to know that I was with him. I hear he is since dead. In the evening I came to
Lucy,

Lucy, and walked to Stowhill; Mrs. Afton was gone or going to bed; I did not see her.

Sunday.—After dinner I went to Stowhill, and was very kindly received. At night I saw my old friend Brodhurst—you know him—the play-fellow of my infancy, and gave him a guinea.

Monday.—Dr. Taylor came, and we went with Mrs. Cobb to Greenhill Bower. I had not seen it perhaps for fifty years. It is much degenerated. Every thing grows old. Taylor is to fetch me next Saturday.

Mr. Green came to see us, and I ordered some physick.

Tuesday.—Physick, and a little company. I dined, I think, with Lucy both Monday and Tuesday.

Wednesday. } I had a few visits, from Peter
Thursday. } Garrick among the rest, and
dined at Stowhill. My breath very short.

Friday.—I dined at Stowhill. I have taken physick four days together.

Saturday.—Mrs. Afton took me out in her chaise, and was very kind. I dined with Mrs. Cobb,

Cobb, and came to Lucy, with whom I found, as I had done the first day, Lady Smith and Miss Vyse.

This is the course of my life. You do not think it much makes me forget Streatham. However it is good to wander a little, lest one should dream that all the world was Streatham, of which one may venture to say, *none but itself can be its parallel.*

I am, &c.

LETTER CCIII.

TO MRS. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM, Ashbourne, June 14, 1779.

YOUR account of Mr. Thrale's illness is very terrible; but when I remember that he seems to have it peculiar to his constitution, that whatever distemper he has, he always has his head affected, I am less frightened. The seizure was, I think, not apoplectical, but hysterical, and therefore not dangerous to life.

I would

He was mistaken: it was a Downright apoplectic fit. That, which was but the second, he got over, but died soon after of a fourth fit.

I would have you however consult such physicians as you think you can best trust. Bromfield seems to have done well, and by his practice appears not to suspect an apoplexy. That is a solid and fundamental comfort. I remember Dr. Marfigli, an Italian physician, whose seizure was more violent than Mr. Thrale's, for he fell down helpless, but his case was not considered as of much danger, and he went safe home, and is now a professor at Padua. His fit was considered as only hysterical.

I hope Sir Philip, who franked your letter, comforts you as well as Mr. Seward. If I can comfort you, I will come to you, but I hope you are now no longer in want of any help to be happy.

I am, &c.

The Doctor sends his compliments; he is one of the people that are growing old.

L E T T E R CCIV.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM, Ashbourne, June 14, 1779.

HOW near we all are to extreme danger. We are merry or sad, or busy or idle, and forget that death is hovering over us. You are a dear lady for writing again. The case, as you now describe it, is worse than I conceived it when I read your first letter. It is still however not apoplectick, but seems to have something worse than hysterical, a tendency to a palsy, which I hope however is now over. I am glad that you have Heberden, and hope we are all safer. I am the more alarmed by this violent seizure, as I can im-pute it to no wrong practices, or intemperance of any kind, and therefore know not how any defence or preservative can be obtained. Mr. Thrale has certainly less exercise than when he followed the foxes, but he is very far from unwieldiness or inactivity, and further

*The more grief
he could not
overcome of his
only son's loss.
Johnson knew it,
but would not
tell it.*

VOL. II.

E

still

50 LETTERS TO AND FROM

still from any vicious or dangerous excess. I fancy, however, he will do well to ride more.

Do, dear Madam, let me know every post how he goes on. Such sudden violence is very dreadful; we know not by what it is let loose upon us, nor by what its effects are limited.

If my coming can either assist or divert, or be useful to any purpose, let me but know. I will soon be with you.

Mrs. Kennedy, Queeney's Baucis, ended last week a long life of disease and poverty. She had been married about fifty years.

Dr. Taylor is not much amiss, but always complaining.

I am, &c.

P. S. Direct the next to Lichfield.

LETTER CCV.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

Ashbourne, June 17, 1779.

IT is certain that your first letter did not alarm me in proportion to the danger, for indeed it did not describe the danger as it was. I am glad that you have Heberden, and hope his restoratives and his preservatives will both be effectual. In the preservatives dear Mr. Thrale must concur; yet what can he reform? or what can he add to his regularity and temperance? He can only sleep less. We will do, however, all we can. I go to Lichfield to-morrow, with intent to hasten to Streatham.

Both Mrs. Aston and Dr. Taylor have had strokes of the palsy. The Lady was sixty-eight, and at that age has gained ground upon it; the Doctor is, you know, not young, and he is quite well, only suspicious of every sensation in the peccant arm. I hope my dear

E 2

master's

This is strange! Dr. Johnson knew that Thrale would eat like four, let Physicians preach: and was not that wanting of some reformation? May be he did not know it, so little did he mind what people were doing. Though he sat by Thrale at dinner, he never noticed whether he eat much or little. A strange man!

master's case is yet flighter, and that as his age is less, his recovery will be more perfect. Let him keep his thoughts diverted, and his mind easy.

*that was impossible:
his loss son was
always uppermost
in his mind.*

I am, dearest and dearest,

Your, &c.

LETTER CCVI.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

Lichfield, June 19, 1779.

WHETHER it was that your description of dear Mr. Thrale's disorder was indistinct, or that I am not ready at guessing calamity, I certainly did not know our danger—our danger, for sure I have a part in it, till that danger was abated.

I am glad that Dr. Heberden, and that you perceive so plainly his recovery. He certainly will not be without any warning that I can give him against pernicious practices. His proportion of sleep, if he slept in the
night,

night, was doubtless very uncommon; but I do not think that he slept himself into a palsy. But perhaps a lethargick is likewise a paralytical disposition. We will watch him as well as we can. I have known a man, who had a stroke like this, die forty years afterward without another. I hope we have now nothing to fear, or no more than is unalterably involved in the life of man.

I begin now to let loose my mind after Queeney and Burney. I hope they are both well. It will not be long before I shall be among you; and it is a very great degree of pleasure to hope that I shall be welcome.

*Meaning Miss
Burney.*

I am, dear Madam,

Your, &c.

LETTER CCVII.

To Mr. T H R A L E.

DEAR SIR,

Lichfield, June 23, 1779.

TO shew you how well I think of your health, I have sent you an hundred pounds to keep for me. It will come within one day of quarter day, and that day you must give me. I came by it in a very uncommon manner, and would not confound it with the rest.

*The wicked mistress
began now to want
him at the Devil,
as the saw popin-
bilixes in the air.*

My wicked mistress talks as if she thought
it possible for me to be indifferent or negli-
gent about your health or hers. If I could
have done any good, I had not delayed an
hour to come to you, and I will come very
soon to try if my advice can be of any use,
or my company of any entertainment.

What can be done you must do for your-
self; do not let any uneasy thought settle
in your mind. Cheerfulness and exercise are
your great remedies. Nothing is for the pre-

sent worth your anxiety. *Vivite læti* is one of the great rules of health. I believe it will be good to ride often, but never to weariness, for weariness is itself a temporary resolution of the nerves, and is therefore to be avoided. Labour is exercise continued to fatigue—exercise is labour used only while it produces pleasure.

Above all, keep your mind quiet, do not think with earnestness even of your health, but think on such things as may please without too much agitation; among which I hope is, dear Sir,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R CCVIII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

June 24, 1779.

THOUGH I wrote yesterday to Mr. Thrale, I think I must write this day to you; and I hope this will be the last letter, for I am coming up as fast as I can; but to go down cost me seven guineas, and I am loth to come back at the same charge.

E 4

You

She now lost no opportunity of bickering with Johnson, as she began to resolve on shaking him off.

That was not her game, as she was then very thick with the singing-masters.

You really do not use me well in thinking that I am in less pain on this occasion than I ought to be. There is nobody left for me to care about but you and my master, and I have now for many years known the value of his friendship, and the importance of his life, too well not to have him very near my heart. I did not at first understand his danger, and when I knew it, I was told likewise that it was over—and over I hope it is for ever. I have known a man seized in the same manner, who, though very irregular and intemperate, was never seized again. Do what you can, however, to keep my master cheerful, and slightly busy, till his health is confirmed; and if we can be sure of that, let Mr. Perkins go to Ireland and come back as opportunity offers, or necessity requires, and keep yourself airy, and be a *funny little thing*.

I am, &c.

LETTER CCIX.

To Mr. THRALE.

DEAR SIR,

July 15, 1779.

THOUGH I wrote yesterday to my mistress, I cannot forbear writing immediately to you, my sincere congratulation upon your recovery from so much disorder, and your escape from so much danger. I should have had a very heavy part in the misfortune of losing you, for it is not likely that I should ever find such another friend, and proportionate at least to my fear must be my pleasure.

As I know not that you brought this disease upon yourself by any irregularity, I have no advice to give you. I can only wish, and I wish it sincerely, that you may live long and happily, and long count among those that love you best, dear Sir,

Your, &c.

*What did that friend
ever do for him?
Nothing: but he was
rich: and riches
render a man dear
to us, though he
does us no good.
Let him call us his
friends, and he will
be loved. Oh the
bewitching power
of opulence! But
so we all are.*

LETTER CCX.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM, Monday, Oct. 4, 1779.

I HAD intended to send you such a card as I have inclosed, when I was alarmed by hearing that my servant had told in the house, for servants never tell their masters, his opinion—that for the two last days Mr. Thrale was visibly worse. His eyes are keen, and his attention upon such occasions vigorous enough.

I therefore earnestly wish, that before you set out, even though you should lose a day, you would go together to Heberden, and see what advice he will give you. In this doubtful pendulous state of the distemper, advice may do much; and physicians, be their power less or more, are the only refuge that we have in sickness. I wish you would do yet more, and propose to Heberden a consultation with some other of the doctors; and if Lawrence is at present fit for business, I wish
he

he might be called, but call somebody. As you make yourselves of more importance, you will be more considered. Do not go away with any reason to tax yourselves with negligence. You are in a state in which nothing that can be done ought to be omitted. We now do right or wrong for a great stake. You may send the children and nurses forward to-morrow, and go yourselves on Wednesday. Little things must not now be minded, and least of all must you mind a little money. What the world has is to be sold, and to be enjoyed by those that will pay its price. Do not give Heberden a single guinea, and subscribe a hundred to keep out the French; we have an invasion more formidable, and an enemy less resistible by power, and less avoidable by flight. I have now done my duty.

I am sorry to find, that Johnson advised vain people to go on still in their vanity on such an occasion: but his failings, like the rest of mankind were now few.

I am, dearest Lady,

Your, &c.

LETTER CCXI.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

Oâ. 5, 1779.

WHEN Mr. Boswell waited on Mr. Thrall in Southwark, I directed him to watch all appearances with close attention, and bring me his observations. At his return he told me, that without previous intelligence he should not have discovered that Mr. Thrall had been lately ill.

It appears to me that Mr. Thrall's disorder, whether grumous or serous, must be cured by bleeding; and I would not have him begin a course of exercise without considerable evacuation. To encrease the force of the blood, unless it be first diluted and attenuated, may be dangerous. But the case is too important for my theory.

The weakness in my ankles left them for a day, but has now turned to a pain in my
toe,

DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON. 61

toe, much like that at Brighthelmstone. It is not bad, nor much more than troublesome; I hope it will not be greater, nor last long.

You all go with the good wishes of, dear Madam,

Your, &c.

LETTER CCXII.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM, London, Oct. 8, 1779.

I BEGIN to be frighted at your omission to write; do not torment me any longer, but let me know where you are, how you got thither, how you live there, and every thing else that one friend loves to know of another.

I will show you the way.

On Sunday the gout left my ankles, and I went very commodiously to church. On Monday night I felt my feet uneasy. On Tuesday I was quite lame. That night I took an opiate, having first taken physick and fasted. Towards morning on Wednesday the pain remitted.

mitted.—Bozzy came to me, and much talk we had. I fasted another day; and on Wednesday night could walk tolerably. On Thursday, finding myself mending, I ventured on my dinner, which I think has a little interrupted my convalescence. To-day I have again taken physick, and eaten only some stewed apples. I hope to starve it away. It is now no worse than it was at Brighthelmstone.

This, Madam, is the history of one of my toes; the history of my head would perhaps be much shorter. I thought it was the gout on Saturday. It has already lost me two dinners abroad, but then I have not been at much more charges, for I have eaten little at home.

Surely I shall have a letter to-morrow.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R CCXIII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM, London, Oct. 11, 1779.

I THOUGHT it very long till I heard from you, having sent a second letter to Tunbridge, which I believe you cannot have received. I do not see why you should trouble yourself with physicians while Mr. Thrale grows better. Company and bustle will, I hope, complete his cure. Let him gallop over the Downs in the morning, call his friends about him to dinner, and frisk in the rooms at night, and outrun time and outface misfortune.

Notwithstanding all authorities against bleeding, Mr. Thrale bled himself well ten days ago.

You will lead a jolly life, and perhaps think little of me; but I have been invited twice to Mrs. Vesey's conversation, but have not gone. The gout that was in my ankles when
Queeney

64 LETTERS TO AND FROM

Queeney criticised my gait, passed into my toe, but I have hunted it, and starved it, and it makes no figure. It has drawn some attention, for Lord and Lady Lucan sent to enquire after me. This is all the news that I have to tell you. Yesterday I dined with Mr. Strahan, and Boswell was there. We shall be both to-morrow at Mr. Ramsay's. Now sure I have told you quite all, unless you yet want to be told that

I am, &c.

L E T T E R CCXIV.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

O&. 16, 1779.

THE advice given you by Dr. Pepys agrees very exactly with my notions. I would not bleed but in exigencies. Riding and cheerfulness will, I hope, do all the business. All alive and merry, must be my master's motto.

How did you light on your specifick for the tooth-ach? You have now been troubled
with

with it less. I am glad you are at last relieved.

You say nothing of the *younglings*; I hope they are not spoiled with the pleasures of Brighthelmston, a dangerous place, we were told, for *children*. You will do well to keep them out of harm's way.

From the younglings let me pass to a veteran; you tell me nothing of Mr. S——; I hope he is well, and cheerful and communicative. Does Mr. Thrall go and talk with him, and do you run in and out? You may both be the better for his conversation.

I am sorry for poor Thomas, who was a decent and civil man. It is hard that he should be overwhelmed by a new-comer. But *thou by some other shalt be laid as low*. Bowen's day may come. A finer shop may be erected, kept by yet a fairer man, and crowded by greater numbers of fine gentlemen and fine ladies.

My foot gives me very little trouble; but it is not yet well. I have dined, since you saw me, not so often as once in two days. But I am told how well I look; and I really think I get more mobility. I dined on Tues-

day with Ramsay, and on Thursday with Paoli, who talked of coming to see you, till I told him of your migration.

Mrs. Williams is not yet returned; but discord and discontent reign in my humble habitation, as in the palaces of monarchs.—Mr. Levet and Mrs. Desmoulins have vowed eternal hate. Levet is the more insidious, and wants me to turn her out. Poor Williams writes word that she is no better, and has left off her physick. Mr. Levet has seen Dr. Lewis, who declares himself hopeless of doing her any good. Lawrence desponded some time ago.

I thought I had a little fever some time, but it seems to be starved away. Bozzy says, he never saw me so well. I hope you will say the same when you see me: methinks it will be pleasant to see you all—there is no danger of my forgetting you. Only keep or grow all well, and then I hope our meeting will be happy.

I am, &c.

LETTER CCXV.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

October 21, 1779.

YOUR treatment of little * * * * was undoubtedly right; when there is so strong a reason against any thing as unconquerable terrour, there ought surely to be some weighty reason for it before it is done. But for putting into the water a child already well, it is not very easy to find any reason strong or weak. That the nurses fretted, will supply me during life with an additional motive to keep every child, as far as is possible, out of a nurse's power. A nurse made of common mould will have a pride in overpowering a child's reluctance. There are few minds to which tyranny is not delightful; power is nothing but as it is felt, and the delight of superiority is proportionate to the resistance overcome. *a horrid truth.*

I walked yesterday to Covent-garden, and feel to-day neither pain nor weakness. Send

F 2

me,

me, if you can, such an account of yourself and my master.

Sir Philip sent me word that he should be in town, but he has not yet called. Yesterday came Lady Lucan and Miss Bingham, and she said it was the first visit that she had paid.

Your new friend Mr. Bowen, who has sold fifty sets, had but thirty to sell, and I am afraid has yet a set or two for a friend. There is a great deal of fallacy in this world. I hope you do not teach the company wholly to forsake poor Thomas.

The want of company is an inconvenience, but Mr. Cumberland is a million. Make the most of what you have. Send my master out to hunt in the morning, and to walk the rooms in the evening; and bring him as active as a stag on the mountain, back to the borough. When he is in motion he is mending.

The young ones are very good in minding their book. If I do not make something of them, *'twill reflect upon me, as I knew not my trade*; for their parts are sufficiently known, and every body will have a better opinion of
their

their industry than of mine. However, I hope when they come back, to accustom them to more lessons.

Your account of Mr. Scrase gives me no delight. He was a friend upon all occasions, whether assistance was wanted from the purse or the understanding. When he is gone, our barrier against calamity is weakened; and we must act with caution, or we shall be in more danger. Consult him, while his advice is yet to be had.

What makes C—— hate B——. D—— is indeed a rival, and can upon occasion *provoke a bugle*. But what has B—— done? Does he not like her look?

* * * * * has passed one evening with me. He has made great discoveries in a library at Cambridge, and he finds so many precious materials, that his book must be a porter's load. He has sent me another sheet.

I am, dearest of all dear Ladies,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R CCXVI.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM, London, October 25, 1779.

LET me repair an injury done by misinformation to Mr. Bowen. He had at first indeed only thirty, that is, two shares ; but he afterwards purchased two shares more. So all that he says I suppose is true.

On Saturday I walked to Dover-street, and back. Yesterday I dined with Sir Joshua. There was Mr. Elliot of Cornwall, who enquired after my master. At night I was bespoken by Lady Lucan ; but she was taken ill, and the assembly was put off. I am to dine with Renny to-morrow.

I hope Mr. Thrale scours the country after the early horn, and at night flutters about the rooms, and once a-day makes a lusty dinner. I eat meat but once in two days, at most but four times a-week, reckoning several weeks together ; for it is neither necessary nor prudent to be nice in regimen. Renny told
me

*his lusty dinners
contributed much
to his death.*

me yesterday, that I look better than when she knew me first.

It is now past the postman's time, and I have no letter; and that is not well done, because I long for a letter; and you should always let me know whether you and Mr. Thrale, and all the rest, are or are not well. Do not serve me so often, because your silence is always a disappointment.

Some old gentlewomen at the next door are in very great distress. Their little annuity comes from Jamaica, and is therefore uncertain; and one of them has had a fall, and both are very helpless; and the poor have you to help them. Persuade my master to let me give them something for him. It will be bestowed upon real want.

I hope all the younglings go on well, that the eldest are very prudent, and the rest very merry. We are to be merry but a little while; Prudence soon comes to spoil our mirth. Old Times have bequeathed us a precept, to *be merry and wise*, but who has been able to observe it.

There is a very furious fellow writing with might and main against the life of Milton.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R CCXVII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM, London, October 28, 1779.

SOME days before our last separation, Mr. Thrale and I had one evening an earnest discourse about the business with Mr. Scrase. For myself, you may be sure I am very willing to be useful; but surely all use of such an office is at a very great distance. Do not let those fears prevail which you know to be unreasonable; a will brings the end of life no nearer. But with this we will have done, and please ourselves with wishing my master *multos et felices*.

Charlotte Lennox. C——L—— accuses * * * * of making a party against her play. I always hissed away the charge, supposing him a man of honour; but I shall now defend him with less confidence. *Nequid nimis*. Horace says, that *Nil admirari* is the only thing that can
make

make or keep a man happy. It is with equal truth the only thing that can make or keep a man honest. The desire of fame not regulated, is as dangerous to virtue as that of money. I hope C—— scorns his little malice.

I have had a letter for * * * , which I have inclosed. Do not lose it; for it contains a testimony that there may be some pleasure in this world; and that I may have a little of the little that there is, pray write to me. I thought your last letter long in coming.

The two younglings, what hinders them from writing to me. I hope they do not forget me.

Will Master give me any thing for my poor neighbours? I have had from Sir Joshua and Mr. Strahan; they are very old maids, very friendless and very helpless.

Mrs. Williams talks of coming home this week from Kingston, and then there will be *merry doings*.

I eat meat seldom, and take physick often, and fancy that I grow light and airy. A man that does not begin to grow light and airy at
seventy,

74 LETTERS TO AND FROM

seventy, is certainly losing time, if he intends ever to be light and airy.

I could fill up this blank, if I chose: but will not, as thereby hangs a tale.

I dined on Tuesday with * * * and hope her little head begins to settle. She has, however, some scruples about the company of a lady whom she has lately known. I pacified her as well as I could. So no more at present; but hoping you are all in good health, as I am at this time of writing, (excuse haste)

I am, dearest dearest Lady,

Your, &c.

LETTER CCXVIII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

London, Nov. 2, 1779.

THIS day I thought myself sure of a letter, but so I am constantly served. Mr. Cumberland and Mrs. * * * * , and Mrs. Byron, and any body else, puts me out of your head; and I know no more of you than if you were

I

on

on the other side of the Caspian. I thought the two young things were to write too ; but for them I do not much care.

On Saturday came home Mrs. Williams, neither better nor worse than when she went ; and I dined at * * * * 's, and found them well pleased with their Italian journey. He took his Lady and son, and three daughters. They staid five months at Rome. They will have now something to talk of.

I gave my poor neighbour your half guinea, and ventured upon making it two guineas at my master's expence. Pray, Madam, how do I owe you half a guinea ?

I dined on Sunday with Mr. Strahan, and have not been very well for some little time. Last night I was afraid of the gout, but it is gone to-day.

There was on Sunday night a fire at the north end of London-bridge, which has, they say, destroyed the water-work.

Does Mr. Thrale continue *to hunt in fields for health unbought* ? If his taste of former pleasures returns, it is a strong proof of his recovery. When we meet, we will be jolly blades.

I know

76 LETTERS TO AND FROM

I know not well how it has happened,
but I have never yet been at the B——s.
* * * * * has called twice on me, and I
have seen some more sheets—and away we
go.

I am, &c.

LETTER CCXIX.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

M A D A M,

London, Nov. 4, 1779.

So I may write and write, and nobody care;
but you can write often enough to Dr.
Burney. Queeney sent me a pretty letter, to
which * * * added a silly short note, in such
a silly white hand, that I was glad it was no
longer.

I had heard before that * * * * had lost
not only ten thousand, as you tell me, but
twenty thousand, as you with great consist-
ency tell Dr. Burney; but knowing that no
man can lose what he has not, I took it little
to heart. I did not think of borrowing; and
indeed

indeed he that borrows money for adventures deserves to lose it. No man should put into a lottery more than he can spare. Neither D——, however, nor B—— have given occasion to his loss.

Notice is taken that I have a cold and a cough; but I have been so long used to disorders so much more afflictive, that I have thought on them but little. If they grow worse, something should be done.

I hear from every body that Mr. Thrale grows better. He is *columen domus*; and if he stands firm, little evils may be overlooked. Drive him out in a morning, lead him out at night, keep him in what bustle you can.

Do not neglect Scrase. You may perhaps do for him what you have done for * * * * The serious affair I do not wonder that you cannot mention; and yet I wish it were transacted while Scrase can direct and superintend it. No other man, if he shall have the same skill and kindness, which I know not where to find, will have the same influence.

Sir Philip never called upon me, though he promised me to do it. Somebody else has laid hold upon him.

I live

78 LETTERS TO AND FROM

I live here in stark solitude. Nobody has called upon me this live-long day ; yet I comfort myself that I have no tortures in the night. I have not indeed much sleep ; but I suppose I have enough, for I am not as sleepy in the day-time as formerly.

I am, &c.

LETTER CCXX.

TO MRS. THRALE.

London, November 7, 1779.

POOR Mrs. * * * *, I am glad that she runs to you at last for shelter. Give her, dear Madam, what comfort you can. Has any calamity fallen upon her ? Her husband, so much as I hear, is well enough spoken of ; nor is it supposed that he had power to do more than has been done. But life must have its end, and commonly an end of gloomy discontent, and lingering distress.

While

While you are vigorous and sprightly, you must take into your protection as many as you can of those who are tottering under their burden. When you want the same support, may you always find it.

I have for some time had a cough and a cold, but I did not mind it; continuance, however, makes it heavy; but it seems to be going away.

My master, I hope, hunts and walks, and courts the belles, and shakes Brighthelmston. When he comes back, frolick and active, we will make a feast, and drink his health, and have a noble day.

Of the Lucans I have never heard since. On Saturday, after having fasted almost all the week, I dined with Renny. For Wednesday I am invited by the * * * *s, and if I am well, purpose to go. I imagine there will be a large company. The invitation is to dine and spend the evening. Too much at a time. I shall be in danger of crying out, with Mr. Head, *catamaran*, whatever that may mean, for it seemed to imply tediousness and disgust. I do not much like to go, and I do not much like to stay away.

*Miss Reynolds
Letter to her father*

Have

Have you any assemblies at this time of the year? and does Queeney dance? and does B—— dance too? I would have B—— dance with C——, and so make all up.

Discord keeps her residence in this habitation, but she has for some time been silent. We have much malice, but no mischief. Levet is rather a friend to Williams, because he hates Desmoulines more. A thing that he should hate more than Desmoulines, is not to be found.

I hear, but you never tell me any thing, that you have at last begun to bathe. I am sorry that your toothach kept you out of the water so long, because I know you love to be in it.

If such letters as this were to cost you any thing, I should hardly write them; but since they come to you for nothing, I am willing enough to write, though I have nothing to say; because a sorry letter serves to keep one from dropping totally out of your head; and I would not have you forget that there is in the world such a poor being as, Madam,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R CCXXI.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

London, Nov. 8, 1779.

YOU are a dear dear lady. To write so often, and so sweetly, makes some amends for your absence. Your last letter came about half an hour after my last letter was sent away; but now I have another. You have much to tell me, and I have nothing to tell you; yet I am eager to write, because I am eager for your answer.

I thought C—— had told you his loss. If it be only report, I do not much credit it. Something perhaps he may have ventured, but I do not believe he had ten thousand pounds, or the means of borrowing it. Of B——, I suppose the fact is true, that he is gone; but for his loss, can any body tell who has been the winner? And if he has lost a sum disproportionate to his fortune, why should

VOL. II.

G

he

he run away when payment cannot be compelled?

Sir Thomas Mill.

Of Sir Thomas I can make no estimate; but if he is distressed, I am sorry; for he was in his prosperity civil and officious.

It has happened to ———, as to many active and prosperous men, that his mind has been wholly absorbed in business, or at intervals dissolved in amusement; and habituated so long to certain modes of employment or diversion, that in the decline of life it can no more receive a new train of images, than the hand can acquire dexterity in a new mechanical operation. For this reason a religious education is so necessary. Spiritual ideas may be recollected in old age, but can hardly be acquired.

and often make us more disgusting than we would otherwise be, by plaguing people with the repetition of them.

You shall not hide Mrs. * * * * from me. For if she be a feeler, I can bear a feeler as well as you; and hope, that in tenderness for what she feels from nature, I am able to forgive or neglect what she feels by affectation. I pity her, as one in a state to which all must come; and I think well of her judgment in chusing you to be the depository of
her

her troubles, and easer of her bosom. Fondle her, and comfort her.

Your letters have commonly one good paragraph concerning my master, who appears to you, and to every body, to mend upon the whole; though your vigilance perceives some accidental and temporary alterations, which, however, I am willing to hope are more rare and more slight than they were at first. Let him hunt much, and think little, and avoid solitude. I hope time has brought some company whom you can call now to your table. Does he take to ———? Does he love her as you profess to love ———? with a fifth part of the kindness that she has for me. I am well rewarded for what I have taught you of computation, by seeing our friendship divided into factions; so we stand, do we? as two to ten. A pretty appearance upon paper, and still prettier in the heart. Well—*go thy ways old Jack.*

Of the capture of Jamaica nothing is known, nor do I think it probable or possible. How the French should in a few days take from us an island, which we could not in almost a century take from a few fugitive Negroes whom the Spaniards left behind them, is not easily

84 LETTERS TO AND FROM

imagined. If you stay much longer in Sussex, you may perhaps hear that London is taken.

We have a kind of epidemick cold amongst us, of which I have had my part, but not more than my part; and I think myself growing well. I have lived very sparingly, but shall have some dinner to-day; and Baretti dines with me.

*That I did as seldom
as I could, though
often scolded for it;
but I hated to see
the victuals grow'd
by poor Mrs. Williams,
that would often carve,
though stone-blind.*

I am, dearest Madam,

Your, &c.

LETTER CCXXII.

Mrs. THRALE to Dr. JOHNSON.

Brighton, Nov. 11, 1779.

IT is a great pleasure to me, dear Sir, that you should be pleased with my correspondence; I hope there is approbation mixed with a partiality which does me infinite honour. I have known you prejudiced in favour of
of

of people you could not quite approve sometimes; but I would not have that be my case. You say true enough about our political fears, which magnify by mere distance from the capital, and paucity of conversation: not but that every one here has, I trust, domestick terrors enough to employ his thoughts as well as myself—but those are uneasinesses one cannot *talk* about, and 'tis therefore perhaps that we seek some common theme of lamentation, when all may express concern, and be applauded by the rest for appearing to feel it. What an artificial life one does lead! and how sincerely one's heart revolts all day long against one's own conduct! Mr. Thrall's situation perpetually in my thoughts, is a subject on which no talk can be had even with *you*, yet what signifies dissembling so—I know his danger.

*And she wench
herself above all.
She heard the voice
of conscience at
intervals in spite
of herself.*

Poor Mrs. * * * * is past dissembling *her* cares, or their consequences, a ruined constitution: my master does not like her much, nor dislike her: he is all so gay now—*up among the boughs*, as Miss Owen calls it. We have many provincial phrases in her country and mine, that are more expressive than your fine finished English sentences. They will live

too, I dare say, to the end of time, and see changes and losses affect the language with a variety of alterations, while they remain just where they always were—in the same manner as the turf monument on Marlborough Downs will outstand all the statues of Westminster Abbey.

I am sorry to hear that there is an influenza about the town again: What is the true reason of these contagious colds? I have heard men account for them, as being produced by a pestilential vapour broken out from some fissure of the earth in a distant region; but surely were that the case, one should hear accounts of its regular and marked progress over the continent, from which we are not so divided as to want intelligence of less important matters than these. What is plague in one country may, for ought I know, be influenza in another; however—do tell me when you write next.

I believe our friend ——— has lost something, notwithstanding your reasons to the contrary: one may reason one's self out of the belief of any thing, but I see the man looks all amazed somehow; and I feel as sure

as

as if he had told me, that some great evil of the pecuniary kind has befallen him: if you will credit no illness till you see the patient panting for life, or no money lost till you read over his banker's book, much may be suffered by us all while you escape from the necessity of sympathizing, but we are ruining and dying all the time. Do you remember when Mr. Perkins told us of that fellow A——r, who would force us into a law-suit and then lost his cause—how I asked in what manner he looked? Why, says Perkins, *he looked like a man that was nonsuited*. He would say much the same of Mr. ———.

What shall I tell you next that is curious or entertaining, to keep up the liking you have to my letters? they are not very admirable from their profundity: I was reading the other day in some book, that Cardan was delighted in his old age to find that the letters he wrote in his youth were absolutely unintelligible even to himself, so recondite were the subjects of them, and so deep the erudition in which every sentiment was involved: the satisfaction with which we shall one day review our correspondence will be of a very different nature from his.

Lord Robert Manners told me a pretty story here one day, à propos to nothing in the world; but I liked it, and will tell it you: he would have willingly sworn to its truth. We were, says he, in the front of the battle at Fontenoy, when I observed my friend Honeywood endeavouring to cleave down a soldier of the enemy, but his hanger sticking fast in the shoulder, the fellow gained power to thrust him through the side with his bayonet, while another struck him on the head and face with a sabre, so that he immediately dropped: my attention being called away to annoy others and defend myself, *I thought no more on't*: but next day, when the waggons were carrying off the wounded, I saw Honeywood on one of them, with half-a-dozen of soldiers lying a-top of him—Poor fellow, says I to myself, thou art done for now sure enough. But what was my surprise when we came to Hanau, in receiving a message, with Mr. Honeywood's compliments, and desired I would come and see his wounds dressed. I went directly—and now Bob look sharp, cries the gallant creature, and thou shalt see my brains; and Middleton the surgeon here shall bear witness that I have some.

Was

Was not this a fine courageous fellow? We have a loss of Lord Robert; I loved his stories passionately; and if one is to expect truth and honour at all in this world, it is from an old general officer, with grey hair and crutches, who scorned falsehood in his youth, and must abhor it in his age.

I can chat no more though; my fears for Mr. Thrale are renewed by his behaviour; yet nothing has happened; it is the general manner that alarms me—Burn all this vagabonding nonsense, and think what should be done. Nay, *pray* be serious, I shall write you a very grave letter to-morrow: I am ashamed to think I could talk about any thing else *now*; but nobody apprehends any thing even at present, except

Your faithful servant,

H. L. THRALE.

And to me

The monster death keeps full in sight,
And puts the fairy hope to flight;
Blackens th' horizon all around,
And points to the abyss profound.

Farewell. Pray write soon and seriously—I am going to dear Mr. Scrase.

LETTER CCXXIII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM, London, Nov. 16, 1779.

PRAY how long does a letter tarry between London and Brighthelmston? Your letter of the 12th I received on the 15th.

Poor Mrs. * * * * is a feeler. It is well that she has yet power to feel. Fiction durst not have driven upon a few months such a conflux of misery. Comfort her as you can.

I have looked again into your grave letter. You mention trustees. I do not see who can be trustee for a casual and variable property, for a fortune yet to be acquired. How can any man be trusted with what he cannot possess, cannot ascertain, and cannot regulate? The trade must be carried on by somebody who must be answerable for the debts contracted. This can be none but yourself; unless you deliver up the property to some other agent, and trust the chance both of his prudence
and

and his honesty. Do not be frightened; trade could not be managed by those who manage it, if it had much difficulty. Their great books are soon understood, and their language,

If speech it may be call'd, that speech is none
Distinguishable in number, mood, or tense,

is understood with no very laborious application.

The help which you can have from any man as a trustee, you may have from him as a friend; the trusteeship may give him power to perplex, but will neither increase his benevolence to assist, nor his wisdom to advise.

Living on God, and on thyself rely.

Who should be trustee but you, for your own and your children's prosperity? I hope this is an end of this unpleasing speculation, and lighter matters may take their turn.

What Mr. Scrase says about the Borough is true, but is nothing to the purpose. A house in the square will not cost so much as building in Southwark; but buildings are more
8 likely

likely to go on in Southwark if your dwelling is at St. James's. Every body has some desire that deserts the great road of prosperity; to look for pleasure in a bye-path. I do not see with so much indignation Mr. Thrale's desire of being the first Brewer, as your despicable dread of living in the Borough. Ambition in little things, is better than cowardice in little things; but both these things, however little to the publick eye, are great in their consequences to yourselves. The world cares not how you brew, or where you live; but it is the business of the one to brew in a manner most advantageous to his family, and of the other to live where the general interest may best be superintended. It was by an accidental visit to the Borough that you escaped great evils last Summer. Of this folly let there be an end, at least an intermission.

I am glad that Queeney danced with Mr. Wade. She was the Sultaneſs of the evening; and I am glad that Mr. Thrale has found a riding companion whom he likes. Let him ride, say I, till he leaves dejection and disease behind him; and let them limp after him an hundred years without overtaking him. When he returns, let me see him frolick and
airy,

See what despicable little thought took the husband and the wife had! However she hated living in the Borough because there she could not see Pizori every day. She carried her point at last, and Mr. Thrale took a ready furnished house in Grosvenor-square, wherein he died.

airy, and focial, and bufy, and as kind to me as in former times.

You feem to be afraid that I fhould be ftarved before you come back. I have indeed practifed abftinence with fome ftubbornnefs, and with fome fuccefs; but as Dryden talks of *writing with a bat*, I am fometimes very witty with a knife and fork. I have managed myfelf very well; except that having no motive, I have no exercife.

At home we do not much quarrel; but perhaps the lefs we quarrel the more we hate. There is as much malignity amongft us as can well fubfift, without any thoughts of daggers or poifons.

Mrs. ——— is by the help of frequent operations ftill kept alive; and fuch is the capricious destiny of mortals, that fhe will die more lamented by her hufband, than I will promife to ufefulness, wifdom, or fanctity. There is always fomething operating diftinct from diligence or fkill. Temple therefore in his compofition of a hero, to the heroick virtues adds good fortune.

I am, &c.

LETTER CCXXIV.

To Mrs. THRALE.

London, Nov. 20, 1779.

I NDEED, dear Madam, I do not think that you have any reason to complain of Mr. Gurcheley, or Mr. Cator. What I proposed is, I suppose, unusual. However, Mr. Thrale knows that I have suggested nothing to you that I had not first said to him. I hear he grows well so fast, that we are not likely to try whose way is best; and I hope he will grow better, and better, and better; and then away with executors and executrixes. He may settle his family himself.

I am not vexed at you for not liking the Borough, but for not liking the Borough better than other evils of greater magnitude. You must take physick, or be sick;
you

DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON. 95

you must live in the Borough, or live still worse.

Pray tell my Queeney how I love her for her letters; and tell Burney that now she is a good girl, I can love her again. Tell Mr. Scrase, that I am sincerely glad to hear that he is better. Tell my master, that I never was so glad to see him in my life, as I shall be now to see him well; and tell yourself, that except my master, nobody has more kindness for you, than,

Dear Madam,

Your, &c.

LETTER CCXXV.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAREST LADY,

April 6, 1780.

YOU had written so often. I have had but two letters from Bath, and the second complains that the first, which you call so many, was neglected, and you pretend to be afraid

*preparatory
bickerings to
the shaking him off.*

afraid of being forgotten. I wonder what should put you out of my mind. You say rightly, that I shall not find such another; for there is not, if I had the choice of all, such another to be found.

It is happy, both for you and Mrs. Montague, that the fates bring you both to Bath at the same time. Do not let new friends supplant the old; they who first distinguished you have the best claim to your attention; those who flock about you now, take your excellence upon credit, and may hope to gain upon the world by your countenance.

I have not quite neglected my Lives. Addison is a long one, but it is done. Prior is not short, and that is done too. I am upon Rowe, who cannot fill much paper. If I have done them before you come again, I think to bolt upon you at Bath; for I shall not be now afraid of Mrs. Cotton. Let Burney take care that she does me no harm.

The diligence of Dr. Moisy I do not understand. About what is he diligent? If Mr. Thrall is well, or only not well because he has been ill, I do not see what the physician can do. Does he direct any regimen, or

does Mr. Thrale regulate himself? Or is there no regularity among you? Nothing can keep him so safe as the method which has been so often mentioned, and which will be not only practicable but pleasant in the Summer, and before Summer is quite gone, will be made supportable by custom.

If health and reason can be preserved by changing three or four meals a week, or if such a change will but encrease the chances of preserving them, the purchase is surely not made at a very high price. Death is dreadful, and fatuity is more dreadful, and such strokes bring both so near, that all their terrors ought to be felt. I hope that to our anxiety for him, Mr. Thrale will add some anxiety for himself.

*Poor Johnson! He
could not help
harping on this string!*

Seward called on me one day, and read Spence. I dined yesterday at Mr. Jodrel's in a great deal of company. On Sunday I dine with Dr. Lawrence, and at night go to Mrs. Vesey. I have had a little cold, or two, or three, but I did not much mind them, for they were not very bad.

Make my compliments to my master, and Queeney, and Burney, and Mrs. Cotton, and

VOL. II.

H

to

98 LETTERS TO AND FROM

to all that care about me, and more than all—or else.

Now one courts you, and another careſſes you, and one calls you to cards, and another wants you to walk ; and amidſt all this, pray try to think now and then a little of me, and write often. Mrs. Strahan is at Bath, but, I believe, not well enough to be in the rooms.

I am, deareſt Madam,

Your, &c.

LETTER CCXXVI.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

ON Sunday I dined with poor Lawrence, who is deafer than ever. When he was told that Dr. Moify viſited Mr. Thrale, he enquired, for what ? and ſaid that there was nothing to be done, which Nature would not do for herſelf. On Sunday evening I was at Mrs. Veſey's, and there was enquiry about my
maſter,

master, but I told them all good. There was Dr. Barnard of Eaton, and we made a noise all the evening; and there was Pepys, and Wraxal till I drove him away. And I have no loss of my mistress, who laughs, and frisks, and frolicks it all the long day, and never thinks of poor Colin.

If Mr. Thrale will but continue to mend, we shall, I hope, come together again, and do as good things as ever we did; but perhaps you will be made too proud to heed me, and yet, as I have often told you, it will not be easy for you to find such another.

Queeney has been a good girl, and wrote me a letter; if Burney said she would write, she told you a fib. She writes nothing to me. She can write home fast enough. I have a good mind not to let her know, that Dr. Barnard, to whom I had recommended her novel, speaks of it with great commendation; and that the copy which she lent me, has been read by Dr. Lawrence three times over. And yet what a gypsey it is. She no more minds me, than if I were a Brangton. Pray speak to Queeney to write again.

*that is, Miss Burney,
the author of Evelina
and Cecilia.*

I have had a cold and a cough, and taken opium, and think I am better. We have had very cold weather; bad riding weather for my master, but he will surmount it all. Did Mrs. Browne make any reply to your comparison of business with solitude, or did you quite down her? I am much pleased to think that Mrs. Cotton thinks me worth a frame, and a place upon her wall. Her kindness was hardly within my hope, but time does wonderful things. All my fear is, that if I should come again, my print would be taken down. I fear I shall never hold it.

Who dines with you? Do you see Dr. Woodward or Dr. Harrington? Do you go to the house where they write for the myrtle? You are at all places of high resort, and bring home hearts by dozens; while I am seeking for something to say about men of whom I know nothing but their verses, and sometimes very little of them. Now I have begun, however, I do not despair of making an end. Mr. Nicholls holds that Addison is the most *taking* of all that I have done. I doubt they will not be done before you come away.

Now you think yourself the first writer in the world for a letter about nothing. Can

DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON. 101

you write such a letter as this? So miscellaneous, with such noble disdain of regularity; like Shakespeare's works, such graceful negligence of transition, like the ancient enthusiasts? The pure voice of nature and of friendship. Now of whom shall I proceed to speak? Of whom but Mrs. Montague? Having mentioned Shakespeare and Nature, does not the name of Montague force itself upon me? Such were the transitions of the ancients, which now seem abrupt, because the intermediate idea is lost to modern understandings. I wish her name had connected itself with friendship; but, ah Colin, thy hopes are in vain. One thing however is left me, I have still to complain; but I hope I shall not complain much while you have any kindness for me. I am,

Dearest and dearest Madam,

Your, &c.

London, April 11, 1780.

You do not date your letters,

H 3

L E T T E R CCXXVII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAREST MADAM, April 15, 1780.

I DID not mistake Dr. Woodward's case; nor should have wanted any explanation. But broken is a very bad word in the city.

Here has just been with me * * * *, who has given—What has he given? Nothing, I believe, gratis. He has given fifty-seven lessons this week. Surely this is business.

I thought to have finished Rowe's life to-day, but I have five or six visitors who hindered me; and I have not been quite well. Next week I hope to dispatch four or five of them.

It is a great delight to hear so much good of all of you. Fanny tells me good news of you, and you speak well of Fanny; and all of you say what one would wish of my master. And my sweet Queeney, I hope is well. Does she

that is, Miss Burney.

ſhe drink the waters? *One glaſs* would do her as much good as it does her father.

You and Mrs. M——— muſt keep Mrs. * * * * about you; and try to make a wit of her. She will be a little unſkilful in her firſt eſſays; but you will ſee how precept and example will bring her forwards.

Surely it is very fine to have your powers. The wits court you, and the Methodiſts love you, and the whole world runs about you; and you write me word how well you can do without me: and ſo, go thy ways poor Jack.

That ſovereign *glaſs of water* is the great medicine; and though his legs are too big, yet my maſter takes a glaſs of water. This is bold practice. I believe, under the protection of a glaſs of water drank at the pump, he may venture once a-week upon a ſtew'd lam-prey.

I wiſh you all good; yet know not what to wiſh you which you have not. May all good continue and increaſe.

I am, &c.

LETTER CCXXVIII.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

London, April 18, 1780.

OF the petticoat government I had never heard. Of the Shakespeare, I was once told by Miss Lawrence; and that is all that I know of it. I have not seen nor heard of any body that has seen the wonders. You may be sure I should tell you any thing that would gratify your curiosity, and furnish you for your present expences of intellectual entertainment. But of this dramattick discovery I know nothing.

I cannot see but my master may with stubborn regularity totally recover. But surely, though the invasion has been repelled from life, the waste it has made will require some time and much attention to repair it. You must not grow weary of watching him, and he must not grow impatient of being watched.

Pray,

Pray, of what wonders do you tell me? You make verses, and they are read in publick, and I know nothing about them. This very crime, I think, broke the link of amity between Richardson and Miss M—, after *Miss M—* a tenderness and confidence of many years. However, you must do a great deal more before I leave you for Lucan or Montague, or any other charmer; if any other charmer would have me.

I am sorry that you have seen Mrs. W—. She and her husband exhibited two very different appearances of human nature. But busy, busy, still art thou. He prevailed on himself to treat her with great tenderness; and to show how little sense will serve for common life, she has passed through the world with less imprudence than any of her family.

Sir Philip's bill has been rejected by the Lords. There was, I think, nothing to be objected to it; but the time at which it was proposed, and the intention with which it was projected. It was fair in itself, but tended to weaken government when it is too weak already.

* * *

* * * * * has no business about you, but to be taught. Poor B——'s tenderness is very affecting. Comfort her all you can. I sincerely wish her well. Declining life is a very awful scene.

Please to tell Mr. Thrale, that I think I grow rather less; and that I was last week almost dizzy with vacuity. I repeat my challenge to alternate diet; and doubt not but both of us, by adhering to it, may live more at ease, and a much longer time.

Though I am going to dine with Lady Craven,

I am, &c.

LETTER CCXXIX.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

MR. E^{Evans} and Mr. P^{Perkin} called on me to-day with your letter to the electors, and another which they had drawn up, to serve in its place. I thought all their objections

jections just, and all their alterations proper. You had mentioned his sickness in terms which give his adversaries advantage, by confirming the report which they already spread with great industry, of his infirmity and inability. You speak, in their opinion, and in mine, with too little confidence in your own interest. By fearing, you teach others to fear. All this is now avoided, and it is to take its chance.

How do you think I live? On Thursday I dined with Hamilton, and went thence to Mrs. Ord. On Friday, with much company at Reynolds's. On Saturday, at Dr. Bell's. On Sunday, at Dr. Burney's, with your two sweets from Kensington, who are both well; at night came Mrs. Ord, Mr. Harris, and Mr. Greville, &c. On Monday, with Reynolds, at night with Lady Lucan; to-day with Mr. Langton; to-morrow with the Bishop of St. Asaph; on Thursday with Mr. Bowles; Friday, —; Saturday, at the Academy; Sunday, with Mr. Ramsay.

I told Lady Lucan how long it was since she sent to me; but she said I must consider
how

how the world rolls about her. She seemed pleased that we met again.

The long intervals of starving I do not think best for Mr. Thrall, nor perhaps for myself, but I knew not how to attain any thing better; and every body tells me that I am very well, and I think there now remains not much cause for complaint: but O for a glass, once in four-and-twenty hours, of warm water! Can warm water be had only at Bath, as steam was to be found only at Knightsbridge. Nature distributes her gifts, they say, variously, to show us that we have need of one another; and in her bounty she bestowed warm water upon Bath, and condemned the inhabitants of other places, if they would warm their water, to make a fire. I would have the young ladies take half a glass every third day, and walk upon it.

I not only scour the town from day to day, but many visitors come to me in the morning; so that my work makes no great progress, but I will try to quicken it. I should certainly like to bustle a little among you, but I am unwilling to quit my post till I have made an end.

You

DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON. 109

You did not tell me in your last letter how Mr. Thrale goes on. If he will be *ruled, for aught appears, he may live on these hundred years.* Fix him when he comes in alternate diet.

I am, dearest Lady,

Your, &c.

London, April 25, 1780.

Now there is a date; look at it.

L E T T E R CCXXX.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAREST MADAM,

MR. Thrale never will live abstinently, till *that he never could be brought to do; though Johnson requires him of all intemperance p. 49. of this same volume, and of irregularity p. 52.* he can persuade himself to abstain by rule. I lived on potatoes on Friday, and on spinach to-day; but I have had, I am afraid, too many dinners of late. I took physick too both days, and hope to fast to-morrow. When he comes home, we will shame him, and

*But three days before
his death Sir Richard
Jebb paid him a
visit a little before
dinner-time, and on
seeing some cucumbers
on a plate, warned
him not to eat
cucumbers: but
Thrale laughed at
him for his advice,
and eat a great
plate-full of them
as if to spite him.*

and Jebb shall scold him into regularity. I am glad, however, that he is always one of the company, and that my dear Queeney is again another. Encourage, as you can, the musical girl.

Nothing is more common than mutual dislike where mutual approbation is particularly expected. There is often on both sides a vigilance not over benevolent; and as attention is strongly excited, so that nothing drops unheeded, any difference in taste or opinion, and some difference where there is no restraint will commonly appear, it immediately generates dislike.

Never let criticisms operate upon your face or your mind; it is very rarely that an author is hurt by his criticks. The blaze of reputation cannot be blown out, but it often dies in the socket; a very few names may be considered as perpetual lamps that shine unconsumed. From the author of Fitzosborne's Letters I cannot think myself in much danger. I met him only once about thirty years ago, and in some small dispute reduced him to whistle; having not seen him since, that is

the last impression. Poor Moore the fabulist was one of the company.

Mrs. Montague's long stay, against her own inclination, is very convenient. You would, by your own confession, want a companion; and she is *par pluribus*, conversing with her you may find *variety in one*.

At Mrs. Ord's I met one Mrs. B——, a travelled lady, of great spirit, and some consciousness of her own abilities. We had a contest of gallantry an hour long, so much to the diversion of the company, that at Ramsay's last night, in a crowded room, they would have pitted us again. There were Smelt, and the Bishop of St. Asaph, who comes to every place; and Lord Monboddo, and Sir Joshua, and ladies out of tale.

The exhibition, how will you do, either to see or not to see! The exhibition is eminently splendid. There is contour, and keeping, and grace, and expression, and all the varieties of artificial excellence. The apartments were truly very noble. The pictures, for the sake of a sky light, are at the top of the house; there we dined, and I sat over against the Archbishop of York. See how
I live

212 LETTERS TO AND FROM

I live when I am not under petticoat government.

I am, &c.

London, May 1, 1780.

Mark that—you did not put the year to your last.

L E T T E R CCXXXI.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

MADAM, Bolt-court, Fleet-street, May 7, 1780.

MR. P—— has just been with me, and has talked much talk, of which the result is, that he thinks your presence necessary for a few days. I have not the same fulness of conviction; but your appearance would certainly operate in your favour, and you will judge better what measures of diligence and of expence are necessary. Money, Mr. P—— says, must be spent; and he is right in wishing that you be made able to judge how far it is spent properly. Perhaps, it is but perhaps, some desire that I have of seeing you,
makes

*Mr. Berlin.
about the Election.*

makes me think the better of his reasons. Can you leave Master? Can you appoint Mrs. ——— governess? If you can, the expence of coming is nothing, and the trouble not much; and therefore it were better gratify your agents. Levy behaves well.

I dined on Wednesday with Mr. Fitzmaurice, who almost made me promise to pass part of the Summer at Llewenny. To-morrow I dine with Mrs. Southwel; and on Thursday with Lord Lucan. To-night I go to Miss Monkton's. Thus I scramble, when you do not quite shut me up; but I am miserably under petticoat government, and yet am not very weary, nor much ashamed.

Pray tell my two dear girls that I will write to both of them next week; and let Burney know that I was *so* angry—

I am, &c.

I know of Mrs. Desmouline's letter. It will be a great charity.

Let me know when you are to come.

L E T T E R CCXXXII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

Bolt-court, Fleet-street,
May 8, 1780.

WOULD you desire better sympathy—At the very time when you were writing, I was answering your letter.

M. Perkin

a very unphilosophical opinion. He ought to have told Thrale to leave off his ridiculous desire of being a member, and ruin his health.

poor Johnson! How fond of the world and its vanities!

Having seen nobody since I saw Mr. P——, I have little more to say, than when I wrote last. My opinion is, that you should come for a week, and shew yourself, and talk in high terms; for it will certainly be propagated with great diligence, that you despair and desist; and to those that declare the contrary, it will be answered, Why then do they not appear? To this no reply can be made that will keep your friends in countenance. A little bustle and a little ostentation will put a stop to clamours, and whispers, and suspicions of your friends, and calumnies of your opponents. Be brisk, and be splendid, and be publick. You will probably be received with
I much

much favour; and take from little people the opportunity which your absence gives them of magnifying their services, and exalting their importance. You may have more friends and fewer obligations.

It is always necessary to shew some good opinion of those whose good opinion we solicit. Your friends solicit you to come; if you do not come, you make them less your friends, by disregarding their advice. Nobody will persist long in helping those that will do nothing for themselves.

The voters of the Borough are too proud and too little dependant to be solicited by deputies; they expect the gratification of seeing the candidate bowing or curtsying before them. If you are proud, they can be fullen.

Such is the call for your presence; what is there to withhold you? I see no pretence for hesitation. Mr. Thrale certainly shall not come; and yet somebody must appear whom the people think it worth the while to look at.

Do not think all this while that I want to see you.—I dine on Thursday at Lord Lu-

116 LETTERS TO AND FROM

can's, and on Saturday at Lady Craven's; and I dined yesterday with Mrs. Southwel.

As to my looks at the Academy, I was not told of them; and as I remember, I was very well, and I am well enough now, and am,

Dearest Lady,

Your, &c.

LETTER CCXXXIII.

Mrs. THRALE to Dr. JOHNSON.

MY DEAR SIR,

May 9.

WHEN did I ever plague you about contour, and grace, and expression? I have dreaded them all three since that hapless day at Compeigne, when you teized me so, and Mr. Thrale made what I hoped would have proved a lasting peace; but French ground is unfavourable to fidelity perhaps, and so now you begin again: after having taken five years breath, you might have done more than this.

—Say

Mrs. Thrale was angry as been rallied for her talk at Compeigne about contour, grace, and expression in some pictures we saw there: and, to be fair, it was not fair in Johnson to laugh at her for nonsense uttered five years before. But take notice, that she has suppressed the letter to which this is an answer, because he laughed at her in it.

—Say another word, and I will bring up afresh the history of your exploits at St. Denys, and how cross you were for nothing—but some how or other, our travels never make any part either of our conversation or correspondence. I am willing to shew myself in Southwark, or in any place, for my master's pleasure or advantage; but have no present conviction that to be re-elected would be advantageous, so shattered a state as his nerves are in just now—Do not you, however, fancy for a moment, that I shrink from fatigue—or desire to escape from doing my duty;—spiting one's antagonist is a reason that never ought to operate, and never does operate with me: I care nothing about a rival candidate's inuendos, I care only about my husband's health and fame; and if we find that he earnestly wishes to be once more member for the Borough—he *shall* be member, if any thing done or suffered by me will help make him so—This P—— and E——, and all the inhabitants of the Borough, friends and foes, are perfectly persuaded of, whatever they may say. I shall leave his daughter governess when I quit Bath, if to quit it will be really wise—a better can he never have.

She was right here again, as the Doctor behaved amiss at St. Denys when he took offence at some little thing fort mal a propos.

Here she says what is not true.

and this also is a job of the first magnitude.

Mrs. Desmoulines has written, as we say, *oddishly*; but since she asked your leave, &c. it is well enough. The anecdote at Mrs. Ord's is exceeding good:—I only wish I had been present to hear such a conversation. Mr. Fitzmaurice is always civiler both to you and me, than either of us deserve.—I wonder (as the phrase is) what he sees in us?—Not much politeness surely.

The Lives will be admirable, but we will talk of them another time: it is not author's criticism ever, or rival's malignity, that gives lasting pain.

Thy tooth is not so keen, &c.

One friend's unkindness is harder to bear than the wisest, and justest, and harshest censures of all the wits and scholars put together; besides, that the venom of the viper is restorative—I remember your telling me once that Doctor Nugent always squeezed the bag into his basin of broth while he was sick——But if the *gens a talents*, as the French call them, agree to hate *me*, the Methodists love *you*, says my dear Mr. Johnson. I do hope that my amiable friend Mrs. Browne *does* love me, I mean

mean with distinction; for her sweet philanthropy inclines her to love and benefit the whole human race:—Why she should, however, be called a Methodist, you must tell—for 'tis considered always a term of reproach, I trust, because I never yet did hear that any one person called himself a Methodist. The lady we are now speaking of is a pious, charitable, peaceful Christian, who at thirty years old, though elegant in her person, and high in health and fortune, resolved upon leading a single life, that she might the better and the easier dedicate her thoughts to God, and her money to such of his poor creatures who might want it. Our theatres in those days were, I believe, but coarsely provided—and sometimes suffered scenes to be exhibited upon them, gross enough to wound a delicacy more blunted than her's—so she resolved to go no more herself; and by uttering her notions of stage immorality, endeavoured to keep away as many acquaintance as she could. I heard her one evening throw out a pretty thought, and for ought I can recollect, a new one too, concerning the death of some gay frisker here at Bath, where such lives and such deaths are common.

The closing hours of a mere pleasure-hunting mortal, said she, remind me of what I can recollect of a theatre when the play is done: all smoke, and stink of candles ill-extinguished, a confused crowd half lost in darkness, with women's screams from time to time heard at the door——horrible contrast to the gay show immediately preceding:—dismal end of a fabulous representation—gloomy conclusion of an airy and fantastic dream. Such a talker you see would not be easily *down'd*, as we call it, by my little whimsical comparison between solitude and society.

*What hypocrisy, when
she was over head
and ears in love with
the amiable Pizzi.*

Well! but if you please we will speak seriously upon the subject—for I had a grave conversation with her about it again yesterday, on her expressing an earnest wish that Mr. Thrale would forego this foolish electioneering business, quit the world at once, and think only on his present health and future hopes. Was every one to do so, Madam, said I, upon the first attack of severe sickness, would it be right? besides, that there are vices peculiar to living alone, as there are others consequent upon commercial, or in any way tumultuous life; and I believe that the same intellectual regimen

regimen will no more suit all souls, than that the same diet will agree with all constitutions. Retirement, like the Sabbath, was made for man, not man for retirement; he who by nature or habit feels himself giddy, wild, and dissipated, would be prudent in seeking his cure from silent contemplation; but a fullen or sensual person is likely to find fewer incitements to *his* favourite crimes in a crowd.

They who converse freely with recluses, have heard strange tales of our arch-enemy's diligence even within convent walls; and though my dear Mr. Johnson is justly enraged at the present spirit of irreverent rapacity which seeks to overthrow places once consecrated to religious retirement—he is, I believe, himself persuaded that the retreats of piety were often too slight a shelter from gross temptations; and that many mortals of each sex have retired to worse sins than those they left behind them in the world.

The danger of this age and nation is all on the other side to be sure—and so far I granted to Mrs. Browne:—but 'tis silly to live like the one-eyed doe in little Susan's fable-book,
without

without knowing there is also danger on the other.

So here is a counterpart to the famous fellow who made himself immortal, by reading a military lecture to Hannibal; yet I really repent no part of the conversation or letter—and am almost sure you will approve the sentiments.

Shall we have some chat about the Lives now? that of Blackmore will be very entertaining I dare say, and he will be rescued from the old wits who worried him, much to your disliking: so a little for love of his Christianity, a little for love of his physick, a little for love of his courage—and a little for love of contradiction, you will save him from his malevolent criticks, and perhaps do him the honour to devour him yourself—as a lion is said to take a great bull now and then from the wolves which had fallen upon him in the desert, and gravely eat him up for his own dinner.

Here must end our correspondence for a while. Let me see you at the Borough-house as soon as I get there: every body says I must come up directly, and my master urges me,
and

W
sh
an
the

and I am going to arrange matters for my departure——If I possess any of the wonderful powers you compliment me with, let me exert them now. Dear Sir Philip will lend me his valuable assistance—it will on this occasion be *invaluable*, respected as he is by his own party. Here are letters come to call me to London—and they shall not find me dilatory now, nor lazy when I am arrived. Pray meet me, and add your counsel to our activity. Mrs. D—— will be my *douce compagne* upon the occasion, and every friend will bustle for poor dear Mr. Thrale this *one* time more! He shall, say you, bustle for himself the next time, and need none of us. Well, so he shall for ought I know; he is quite pert to-day, and so is

Your ever faithful, and
obliged servant,

H. L. THRALE.

LETTER CCXXXIV.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

Bolt-court, Fleet-street,
London, May 9, 1780.

Original
THIS morning brought me the honour of a visit from Sir Philip, who has been to survey Streatham, and thinks it will be long before you can return thither; which he considers as a loss to himself of many pleasant days which your residence might have afforded. We then talked about our mistress, and ; and I said you had most wit, and most literature.

*W
sh
an
the*

*a Mrs. Montaigne
for a penny.*

Mr. Evans brought me your letter, to which I had already sent the answer; nor have I any thing to add, but that the more I reflect, and the more I hear, the more I am convinced of the necessity of your presence. Your adversaries will be for ever saying, that you despair of success, or disdain to obtain it by the usual solicitation. Either of these suppositions generally

nerally received ruins your interest, and your appearance confutes both.

Cette Anne si belle,
Qu'on vante si fort,
Pourquoi ne vient t'elle,
Vraiment elle a tort.

elle?

While you stay away your friends have no answer to give.

Mr. P——, as I suppose you know, has refused to join with H——, and is thought to be in more danger than Mr. Thrane.

Of ——'s letter, I would have you not take any notice; he is a man of no character.

My Lives creep on. I have done Addison, Prior, Rowe, Granville, Sheffield, Collins, Pitt, and almost Fenton. I design to take Congreve next into my hand. I hope to have done before you can come home, and then whither shall I go?

What comes of my dear, sweet, charming, lovely, pretty, little Queeney's learning? This is a sad long interruption, and the wicked world will make us no allowance, but will call us ——

Lady

126 LETTERS TO AND FROM

Lady Lucan says, she hears Queeney is wonderfully accomplished, and I did not speak ill of her.

Did I tell you that Scot and Jones both offer themselves to represent the University in the place of Sir Roger Newdigate. They are struggling hard for what others think neither of them will obtain.

I am not grown fat. I did thrive a little, but I checked the pernicious growth, and am now small as before.

I am, &c.

W
f
an
the

L E T T E R CCXXXV.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

May 23, 1780.

YOUR letter told me all the good news. Mr. Thrale well, Queeney good, and yourself not so ill but that you know how to be made well; and now ——— is gone, you have the sole and undivided empire of Bath; and you talk to many whom you cannot make wiser, and enjoy the foolish face of praise.

But ——— and you have had, with all your adulations, nothing finer said of you than was said last Saturday night of Burke and me. We were at the Bishop of ———'s, a bishop little better than *your* bishop; and towards twelve we fell into talk, to which the ladies listened, just as they do to you; and said, as I heard, *there is no rising unless somebody will cry fire.*

I was

I was last night at Miss Monkton's; and there were Lady Craven and Lady Cranburne, and many ladies and few men. Next Saturday I am to be at Mr. Pepys's, and in the intermediate time am to provide for myself as I can.

You cannot think how doggedly I left your house on Friday morning, and yet Mrs. Abbeys gave me some mushrooms; but what are mushrooms without my mistress?

My master has seen his hand-bill; will he stand to it? I have not heard a word from the Borough since you went away.

Dr. Taylor is coming hastily to town, that he may drive his lawsuit forward. He seems to think himself very well. This lawsuit will keep him in exercise, and exercise will keep him well. It is to be wished that the law may double its delays. If Dr. Wilson dies, he will take St. Margaret's, and then he will have the bustle of the parish to amuse him. I expect him every day.

I am, dear Lady,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R CCXXXVI.

Mrs. THRALE to Dr. JOHNSON.

DEAR SIR,

May.

I AM glad my letter was so good a one. I can certainly say nothing too good of Mr. Thrale, for seeming pleased that I had done what it was my indispensable duty to do, or of his daughter for behaving so sweetly in my absence. We found engagements out of number to be complied with; the first was a concert at the Dean of Offory's (I like his lady violently), and that vexed me, because my looks were not recovered; and so I shone at the *Crescent* like a *pale moon* indeed.

Here is every thing in this pretty town of Bath—every thing possible; good and bad, for what I see. Did we tell you when we were in London the other day, how Miss Burney picked up a female infidel one morning, and bid her read *Rasselas*; and how I lighted on a fanatick, and bid *her* read *Raf-*

VOL. II.

K

felas?

felas? Perhaps not, for you only call such intelligence flattery; though the London wits beat us at that too, when they talk of crying fire in the street, that they may break up a conversation which would otherwise engage them till next day. All this, however, we set on one side during the election hurry. My master will stand to his hand-bill; he *likes* it: and I like exceedingly your sudden removal from the *round tower*, where mushrooms would almost grow of themselves now, the weather is getting so hot. Our flagstones upon the South Parade burn one's feet through one's shoes; but the Bath belles, fearless of *fire ordeal*, trip about, secure in cork soles and a clear conscience. I wish though, that you would put in a word of your own to Mr. Thrall about eating less; for he will mind you more than us, and his too great spirits just at this moment fright me. Oh, here comes Dr. Moyley, to talk about Whig and Tory, and the reign of King Charles the Second; how that style of conversation does wear one out, especially from a professional man, and when one is wishing to bring forward a subject really interesting. It would be a choice comfort to me if the people would agree

W
 sh
 an
 sh

agree to hate dissention, and love one another, and mind their business, and hang the politics. I am sure I had plague enough with such stuff at the Borough, no need to be pursued with it here. Talk to Lawrence if you can commodiously, and let me know the result—I think the *one* glass of water which you scorn so has an effect, and that effect not a good one—it gives dizziness; but there is no immediate harm coming, our Doctors say.

How does Congreve's life turn out? Tell me all the news. I would not wish you to be *too much* flattered: milk itself, when injected into the veins, is poison, the wise men say; so if adulation should be *forced* upon you, cry out, or run away to *me*, or any thing; but I expect these Lives to be very clever things after all, take as little pains with them as you can: we will have all the great prose writers some time, and then I shall be zealous for Bacon.

Mean time, Heaven send this Southwark election safe, for a disappointment would half kill my husband; and there is no comfort in tiring every friend to death in such a manner,

and losing the town at last. How charmingly kind that dear Mr. Devaynes behaved. Well! it was really clever management to carry Sir Philip and him about together so, at a time when they disagreed concerning every subject except serving me; and how excessively agreeable they made themselves that day we dined in St. John's! and how sweet it was to see them united closely in a cause of private friendship! *All my doings*, says your boastful mistress: but I know that water, though the most insipid of all bodies, is the only thing which gives cohesion to every other, and which alone can unite the most heterogeneous substances.

I have no care about enjoying undivided empire, nor any thoughts of disputing it with Mrs. ———. She considers her title as indisputable most probably, though I am sure I never heard her urge it. 'Queen Elizabeth, you remember, would not suffer her's to be enquired into——and I have read somewhere that the Great Mogul is never crowned.

How shall I fill up the other side of the sheet? With a date, if you please; but it will, upon reconsideration, reach but a little way,
so

DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON. 133

so we had as good finish here, and say how much

I am, &c.

H. L. THRALE.

I have got some new matter ; Burney has just shewn me a fine letter from a fine letter-writer, *all about you*, requesting one body to request another body to request of you, that you will read a manuscript play composed by I know not who : the fears, and delicacies, and daintifications of whom filled four sides of a folio paper. I looked grave, and thought how diligently you would peruse it, how hard you would study it, and what marginal notes you would make—for though they don't insist on criticism, they'll admit it. So much for them ; but I have used Mrs. Byrom very ill in not naming her to you, when her partiality is such, that she quarrelled with a friend for denying you *elegance of manner* here one day, though the lady had really granted you in the course of conversation almost every

K 3

other

other attainable excellence : but now that Mr. Tasker has compared you to Venus, we will wonder at nothing.

A-propos to gallantry, here is a gentleman hooted out of Bath for shewing a lady's love letters to him ; and such is the resentment of all the females, that even the house-maid refused to make his bed. I think them perfectly right, as he has broken all the common ties of society ; and if he were to sleep on straw for half a year instead of our old favourites the Capucin friars, it would do him no harm, and set the men a good example.

Adieu, Dear Sir, all goes pretty well with us ; but do speak to Dr. Lawrence about that vertiginous sensation which I fancy is occasioned by the water. We heard of it only once though.

LETTER CCXXXVII.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

HERE has been Dr. Lawrence with me, and I showed him your letter; and you may easily believe we had some talk about my master. He said, however, little that was new, except this, which is of great importance, that if ever he feels any uncommon sensation in his head, such as, heaviness, pain, or noise, or giddiness, he should have immediate recourse to some evacuation, and thinks a cathartick most eligible. He told me a case of a lady, who said she felt a dizziness, and would bleed; to bleed, however, she neglected, and in a few days the dizziness became an apoplexy. He says, but do not tell it, that the use of Bath water, as far as it did any thing, did mischief. He presses abstinence very strongly, as that which must do all that can be done; and recommends the exercise of

K 4

walking,

Dr. Lawrence, and Johnson, and I, and every body preached abstinence to him, and Sir Richard Jebb told him with roundly, that he could not live the year out without it but the glutton was deaf to all such remonstrances.

walking, as tending more to extenuation than that of riding.

D.^r Taylor

*This was the
elegant phrase-
ology of that
Doctor.*

— has let out another pound of blood, and is come to town, brisk and vigorous, fierce and fell, to drive on his lawsuit. Nothing in all life now can be more profligater than what he is; and if, in case, that so be, that they persist for to resist him, he is resolved not to spare no money, nor no time. He is, I believe, thundering away. His solicitor has turned him off; and I think it not unlikely that he will tire his lawyers. But now don't you talk.

My dear Queeny, what a good girl she is. Pray write to me about her, and let me know her progress in the world. Bath is a good place for the initiation of a young lady. She can neither become negligent for want of observers, as in the country; nor by the imagination that she lies concealed in the crowd, as in London. Lady Lucan told me, between ourselves, how much she had heard of Queeny's accomplishments; she must therefore now be careful, since she begins to have the public eye upon her.

A lady

A lady has sent me a vial, like Mrs. Nesbit's vial, of essence of roses. What am I come to?

Congreve, whom I dispatched at the Borough while I was attending the election, is one of the best of the little lives; but then I had your conversation.

You seem to suspect that I think you too earnest about the success of your solicitation: if I gave you any reason for that suspicion, it was without intention. It would be with great discontent that I should see Mr. Thrale decline the representation of the Borough, and with much greater should I see him ejected. To sit in Parliament for Southwark, is the highest honour that his station permits him to attain; and his ambition to attain it, is surely rational and laudable. I will not say that for an honest man to struggle for a vote in the legislature, at a time when honest votes are so much wanted, is absolutely a duty, but it is surely an act of virtue. The expence, if it was more, I should wish him to despise. Money is made for such purposes as this. And the method to which the trade is now brought, will, I hope, save him from any want of what he shall now spend.

*How friendships
disguises things!
Mr. Thrale was
a mere post in
parliament, and
a silent vote
was his only
business there,
as he was no
speaker at all.*

Keep

Keep Mr. Thrall well, and make him keep himself well, and put all other care out of your dear head.

Sir Edward Littleton's business with me was to know the character of a candidate for a school at Brewood in Staffordshire; to which, I think, there are seventeen pretenders.

Do not I tell you every thing? what wouldst thou more of man? It will, I fancy, be necessary for you to come up once again at least, to fix your friends and terrify your enemies. Take care to be informed, as you can, of the ebb or flow of your interest; and do not lose at Capua the victory of Cannæ. I hope I need not tell you, dear Madam, that

I am, &c.

Thursday, May 25, 1780.

No. 8. Bolt-court, Fleet-street, London.

Look at this, and learn.

LETTER CCXXXVIII.

To Mr. THRALE.

DEAR SIR,

London, May 30, 1780.

YOU never desired me to write to you, and therefore cannot take it amiss that I have never written. I once began a letter, in which I intended to exhort you to resolute abstinence; but I rejoice now that I never sent, nor troubled you with advice which you do not want. The advice that is wanted is commonly unwelcome, and that which is not wanted is evidently impertinent.

The accounts of your health, and of your caution, with which I am furnished by my mistress, are just such as would be wished, and I congratulate you on your power over yourself, and on the success with which the exercise of that power has been hitherto rewarded. Do not remit your care; for in your condition it is certain, that security will produce danger.

You

You always used to tell me, that we could never eat too little ; the time is now come to both of us, in which your position is verified. I am really better than I have been for twenty years past ; and if you persist in your present laudable practice, you may live to tell your great grandchildren the advantages of abstinence.

I have been so idle, that I know not when I shall get either to you, or to any other place ; for my resolution is to stay here till the work is finished, unless some call more pressing than I think likely to happen should summon me away. Taylor, who is gone away brisk and jolly, asked me when I would come to him, but I could not tell him. I hope, however, to see standing corn in some part of the earth this Summer, but I shall hardly smell hay, or suck clover flowers.

I am, &c.

LETTER CCXXXIX.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

You mistake about Dr. Taylor's claim upon the Abbey; the prebends are equal, but the senior prebendary has his choice of the livings that are in the gift of the chapter, of which St. Margaret's is one; which if Wilson dies, he may take if he pleases. He went home lusty and stout; having bustled ably about his lawsuit, which at last, I think, he will not get.

Mr. Thrale, you say, was pleased to find that I wish him well; which seems therefore to be a new discovery. I hoped he had known for many a year past that nobody can wish him better. It is strange to find that so many have heard of his fictitious relapse, and so few of his continual recovery.

And you think to run me down with the Bishop and Mrs. Carter, and Sir James; and
I know

I know not whether you may not win a heat, now the town grows empty. Mrs. Vesey suspects still that I do not love them since that *skrimage*. But I bustle pretty well, and shew myself here and there, and do not like to be quite lost. However, I have as many invitations to the country as you; and I do not mind your breakfasts, nor your evenings.

Langton is gone to be an engineer at Chatham; and I suppose you know that Jones and Scot oppose each other for what neither will have.

that is, he may be kept from eating too much: but no body could succeed in that, as no body ever had spirit enough to tell him, that his fits were apopleckish, such is the blessing of being rich, that no body dares to speak out.

If Mr. Thrale at all remits his vigilance, let the Doctor loose upon him. While he is watched he may be kept from mischief, but he never can be safe without a rule; and no rule will he find equal to that which has been so often mentioned, of an alternate diet; in which, at least in this season of vegetation, there is neither difficulty nor hardship.

I am, dearest Madam,

Your, &c.

London, No. 8. Bolt-court, Fleet-street,
June 6, 1780.

Mind this, and tell Queeney.

LETTER CCXL.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

London, June 9, 1780.

TO the question, Who was impressed with consternation? it may with great truth be answered, that every body was impressed, for nobody was sure of his safety.

On Friday the good Protestants met in St. George's Fields, at the summons of Lord George Gordon, and marching to Westminster, insulted the Lords and Commons, who all bore it with great tameness. At night the outrages began by the demolition of the mass-house by Lincoln's Inn.

An exact journal of a week's defiance of government I cannot give you. On Monday, Mr. Strahan, who had been insulted, spoke to Lord Mansfield, who had I think been insulted too, of the licentiousness of the populace; and his Lordship treated it as a very slight irregularity. On Tuesday night they

4

pulled

Come tanti Cogitoni.

He means the Sardinian Chapel, as it is commonly

called. But so illiberal was Johnson made by religion, that he calls here that Chapel a Mass-house,

by way of contempt alluding to the

names of gun-house,

dog-house, the chop-

house, slaughter-house,

and other such: yet

hated the Presbiterian.

That was a nasty

blot in his character

that often made him

hateful to

people of liberal

principles.

pulled down Fielding's house, and burnt his goods in the street. They had gutted on Monday Sir George Savile's house, but the building was saved. On Tuesday evening, leaving Fielding's ruins, they went to Newgate to demand their companions who had been seized demolishing the chapel. The keeper could not release them but by the Mayor's permission, which he went to ask; at his return he found all the prisoners released, and Newgate in a blaze. They then went to Bloomsbury and fastened upon Lord Mansfield's house, which they pulled down; and as for his goods, they totally burnt them. They have since gone to Cane-wood, but a guard was there before them. They plundered some Papists, I think, and burnt a masons-house in Moorfields the same night.

On Wednesday I walked with Dr. Scot to look at Newgate, and found it in ruins, with the fire yet glowing. As I went by, the Protestants were plundering the Sessions-house at the Old Bailey. There were not, I believe, a hundred; but they did their work at leisure, in full security, without sentinels, without trepidation, as men lawfully employed, in full day. Such is the cowardice of a commercial place.

*Not two in all London
could resolve of joining
to each other in their
own defence. The English
gave me a very mean
idea of themselves upon
that occasion.*

place. On Wednesday they broke open the Fleet, and the King's-bench, and the Marshalsea, and Woodstreet-counter, and Clerkenwell Bridewell, and released all the prisoners.

At night they set fire to the Fleet, and to the King's-bench, and I know not how many other places; and one might see the glare of conflagration fill the sky from many parts. The fight was dreadful. Some people were threatened; Mr. Strahan advised me to take care of myself. Such a time of terror you have been happy in not seeing.

The King said in council, that the magistrates had not done their duty, but that he would do his own; and a proclamation was published, directing us to keep our servants within doors, as the peace was now to be preserved by force. The soldiers were sent out to different parts, and the town is now at quiet.

What has happened at your house you will know, the harm is only a few butts of beer; and I think you may be sure that the danger is over. There is a body of soldiers at St. Margaret's Hill.

VOL. II.

L

OF

Call it a time of cowardice. A dozen gentlemen armed only with cudgels would have saved many places: but every individual stood terrified and amazed, which would not have been the case in any other country, though in other countries people are not apt to vaunt their national courage as the English perpetually do. Had it not been for the King's vigorous measures, London would have been all burnt to the ground.

Of Mr. Tyson I know nothing, nor can guess to what he can allude; but I know that a young fellow of little more than seventy, is naturally an unresisted conqueror of hearts.

Pray tell Mr. Thrale that I live here and have no fruit, and if he does not interpose, am not likely to have much; but I think he might as well give me a little, as give all to the gardener.

Pray make my compliments to Queeney and Burney.

I am, &c.

LETTER CCXLI.

Mrs. THRALE to Dr. JOHNSON.

Bath, 3 o'Clock on Saturday morning,
June 10, 1780.

OH, my Dear Sir! was I ever particular in dating a letter before? and is this a time to begin to be particular when I have been up all night in trembling agitation, and only write

Every Englishman
proved a Mrs. Thrale
upon the occasion,
at a time, that any
resistance ever so small
would have stopped
the tumults chiefly
carried on by women
and children as it were
for fun.

ry soul w
confession
no soul
ed to man
to think
ar arms.

write now to drive time forward till the post comes in?—God preserve the future fortunes of my dear girls, I am expecting their doom every instant: now am I glad the Welch estate is not settled—one must find something to be glad of; and these barbarous beings cannot burn up fields of grass nor forests of timber. Miss Burney is frightened, but she says better times will come; she made me date my letter so, and persists in hoping that ten years hence we shall all three read it over together and be merry. Oh no, no, no! here is poor prospect of merriment; the flames of the Romish chapel are not yet extinguished, and the rioters are going to Bristol to burn that. Their shouts are still in my ears; and I do not believe a dog or cat in the town sleeps this night. Mr. Thrale seems thunderstricken, he don't mind any thing; and Queeney's curiosity is stronger than her fears. But perhaps you will ask, *who is consternated?* as you did about the French invasion: surely there is nothing pedantick in expressing fear now however, nor nothing very romantick in feeling it, when, for ought I can tell, our property will be destroyed to-night, and our persons pursued to-morrow. The mob had always an idea of my husband's being a concealed

She was still more glad of it after her marriage with Piorri, who I have a notion will at last run away with it.

So arrogant in prosperity, so dejected in adversity!

No body sleeps, but no body thinks of throwing a brick from his window in defence of his house and himself: all cowers from one end of the Kingdom to the other.

Papist, and they used to say that we kept a priest in the house.

I remember at one election, a fellow reproaching another for being Mr. Thrale's friend; and calling out to him, *what, you are to be made a cardinal, an't you, for serving Popish Harry*: and this new business of the Quebec bill has given them fresh alarm.

*How could she then
think of Shakspeare?
I have a notion these
lines were added
when she revised
these letters for
the press.*

*All this stuff she
has added après
coup.*

Trifles, light as air, are to the jealous
Consummation strong, as proofs of holy writ,

says Shakespear; and when much wiser men than an election-mob is likely to consist of, once take up an hypothesis, they are sure to make all common sense and plain experience bend to it. Like the iron bed of the tyrant Procrustes, who stretched those who were too short, and lopped those that were too long, till he made them fit.

Oh, would to heaven these letters would but come! some hope I have in Perkins's ability and diligence, some in our dear Sir Philip's ever friendly care. God preserve *their* lives for families which adore them. May they *but* save my children's fortunes from a destruction so little expected.

The

*See, see! The whole
family adore even
Perkin the Clerk.*

The mad fools here hooted a poor inoffensive man till he scampered over the wall, and said they were sure he must be the Pope, because he lodged on St. James's Parade, and had a night-gown with gold flowers in it.

Such ideots! but I have a better story than that. When the soldiers were sent for three hours ago, a shopkeeper's wife very wisely said to me, Why now Ma'am, I begins to find what fools we were when we made such a piece of work one election year, and said that no soldiers should come in the town, 'cause we were *free Britons*. Why, Lord have mercy, it was a great deal a better maxim to sleep safe in our beds, than be *free Britons* and burned to death.

So Toryism and martial law, and standing armies for ever; and when the Papists are all burned, and the Protestants all hanged for burning them, the Jews may jump for joy. I think no one else can be pleased.

Here come the letters; safe, safe, safe. Sir Philip, kind creature, has been more than charming; he has saved us all by his friendly activity—God bless him—Do go to his

L 3

house,

Ohaw! Every Englishman was of that opinion during the conflagration: but, that over, every body returned to his old vomit, and would have hanged those very soldiers that had defended them, and saved them from utter destruction.

house, and thank him; pray do, and tell him how I love him—he loves *you*: and a visit from Doctor Johnson will be worth forty letters from me, though I shall write instantly.

Perkins has behaved like an emperor, and 'tis my earnest wish and desire, command if you please to call it so, that you will go over to the brewhouse and express *your* sense of his good behaviour.

All is over so far, blessed be God: but Mr. Thrale is scarcely in security here, for the rioters have strange ideas about his *Papism* some how—We will move off therefore, and finish our Summer at Brighthelmstone, where I trust there is peace and quietness; and if not, why the sea and the packet are at hand. Mean time, let us pray to be delivered alike from the dangers of despotism and anarchy. The miniature I have seen gives me a perfect idea of what you in London have been witness to—but here will be no camps they say, and in town we have been told all people are putting immediately under martial law.

So farewell, and direct to Suffex after tomorrow; and let us hope these horrors are nearly

The best would have been to come to London, and take care of his property himself; but he was naturally as great a coward as all the rest; and, terrified as he was, he thought of nothing but to save his skin, which he thought in danger, and his silly wife helped to encrease his terrors.

nearly at an end. Was not there an insurrection once in Henry VIIIth's time something like this? when foreigners, of whatever religion or country they might be, became victims to the fury of a misgoverned multitude; many of which were hanged afterwards for burning the property of *aliens*, as they were then phrased. I think the story is in one of our old folios at Streatham, and that the rioters proceeded exactly like those of the present day. 'Tis one of those fevers perhaps which some constitutions are subject to, and in a couple more centuries we shall have such another shock to recover from. Mean time I shall not go to bed, because my mind is too much agitated; but as soon as this letter is folded up, the cold bath shall steady my nerves a little for packing my trunks, and carrying the family across these country roads where least confusion may be expected, and we will get to the seaside at Portsmouth, and so coast away to our old quarters.

The worst is, it will, before your letters reach me, be a full fortnight at least; but never mind, every soul one meets will be able to give general accounts, and for particulars we may wait—or make more haste, if to wait

L 4 should

should prove too difficult. I am at all times and places,

DEAR SIR,

Your most faithful servant,

L. H. THRALE.

I wrote you a long letter this morning, or more properly yester morning, and said we were going to Bristol, but you must not mind that.

L E T T E R CCXLII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

June 10, 1780.

YOU have ere now heard and read enough to convince you, that we have had something to suffer, and something to fear, and therefore I think it necessary to quiet the solicitude which you undoubtedly feel, by telling you that our calamities and terrors are now at an end. The soldiers are stationed so as to be every where within call; there is no longer any body of rioters,

ers, and the individuals are hunted to their holes, and led to prison; the streets are safe and quiet; Lord George was last night sent to the Tower. Mr. John Wilkes was this day with a party of soldiers in my neighbourhood, to seize the publisher of a seditious paper. Every body walks, and eats, and sleeps in security. But the history of the last week would fill you with amazement, it is without any modern example.

Several chapels have been destroyed, and several inoffensive Papists have been plundered, but the high sport was to burn the jails. This was a good rabble trick. The debtors and the criminals were all set at liberty; but of the criminals, as has always happened, many are already retaken, and two pirates have surrendered themselves, and it is expected that they will be pardoned.

Government now acts again with its proper force; and we are all again under the protection of the King and the law. I thought that it would be agreeable to you and my master to have my testimony to the publick security; and that you would sleep more quietly when I told you that you are safe.

I am, dearest Lady, Your, &c.

L E T T E R CCXLIII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

London, June 12, 1780.

ALL is well, and all is likely to continue well. The streets are all quiet, and the houses are all safe. This is a true answer to the first enquiry which obtrudes itself upon your tongue at the reception of a letter from London. The publick has escaped a very heavy calamity. The rioters attempted the Bank on Wednesday night, but in no great number; and like other thieves, with no great resolution. Jack Wilkes headed the party that drove them away. It is agreed, that if they had seized the Bank on Tuesday, at the height of the panick, when no resistance had been prepared, they might have carried irrecoverably away whatever they had found. Jack, who was always zealous for order and decency, declares, that if he be trusted with power, he will not leave a rioter alive. There is however now no longer any need of heroism

roism or bloodshed; no blue riband is any longer worn.

——— called on Friday at Mrs. Gardiner's, to see how she escaped or what she suffered; and told her, that she had herself too much affliction within doors, to take much notice of the disturbances without.

It was surely very happy that you and Mr. Thrale were away in the tumult; you could have done nothing better than has been done, and must have felt much terrour which your absence has spared you.

We have accounts here of great violences committed by the Protestants at Bath; and of the demolition of the malshouse. We have seen so much here, that we are very credulous.

Pray tell Miss Burney that Mr. Hutton called on me yesterday, and spoke of her with praise; not profuse, but very sincere, just as I do. And tell Queeney, that if she does not write oftener, I will try to forget her. There are other pretty girls that perhaps I could get, if I were not constant.

My

My Lives go on but slowly. I hope to add some to them this week. I wish they were well done.

*But Master was
frighted enough,
though he talked
big when the whole
was over.*

Thus far I had written when I received your letter of battle and conflagration. You certainly do right in retiring; for who can guess the caprice of the rabble? My master and Queeney are dear people for not being frightened, and you and Burney are dear people for being frightened. I wrote to you a letter of intelligence and consolation; which, if you staid for it, you had on Saturday; and I wrote another on Saturday, which perhaps may follow you from Bath, with some atchievement of John Wilkes.

Do not be disturbed; all danger here is apparently over: but a little agitation still continues. We frighten one another with seventy thousand Scots to come hither with the Dukes of Gordon and Argyle, and eat us, and hang us, or drown us; but we are all at quiet.

I am glad, though I hardly know why, that you are gone to Brighthelmstone rather than to Bristol. You are somewhat nearer home,
and

and I may perhaps come to see you. Bright-helmstone will soon begin to be peopled, and Mr. Thrale loves the place; and you will see Mr. Scrase; and though I am sorry that you should be so outrageously unroofed, I think that Bath has had you long enough.

Of the commotions at Bath there has been talk here all day. An express must have been sent; for the report arrived many hours before the post, at least before the distribution of the letters. This report I mentioned in the first part of my letter, while I was yet uncertain of the fact.

When it is known that the rioters are quelled in London, their spirit will sink in every other place, and little more mischief will be done.

I am, dear Madam,

Your, &c.

LETTER CCXLIV.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

London, June 14, 1780.

EVERY thing here is safe and quiet. This is the first thing to be told; and this I told in my last letter directed to Brighthelmstone. There has indeed been an universal panick, from which the King was the first that recovered. Without the concurrence of his ministers, or the assistance of the civil magistrate, he put the foldiers in motion, and saved the town from calamities, such as a rabble's government must naturally produce.

*So it was to his
immortal honour:
but the rascals
proved unthankful
when the danger
was over, and ministers
were on the brink
of being prosecuted
for not having
pushed to some
formality of the
law when the
soldiery was called
in to quell the
rioters.*

Now you are at ease about the publick, I may tell you that I am not well; I have had a cold and cough some time, but it is grown so bad, that yesterday I fasted and was bloodied, and to day took physick and dined: but neither fasting nor bleeding, nor dinner, nor physick, have yet made me well.

No

No sooner was the danger over, than the people of the Borough found out how foolish it was to be afraid, and formed themselves into four bodies for the defence of the place; through which they now march morning and evening in a martial manner.

and so did then all the inhabitants of London.

and very brave they looked.

I am glad to find that Mr. Thrale continues to grow better; if he is well, I hope we shall be all well: but I am very weary of my cough, though I have had much worse.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R CCXLV.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM, London, June 15, 1780.

LAST night I told you that I was not well; and though you have much else to think on, perhaps you may be willing enough to hear, that by the help of an opiate, I think myself better to-day.

Whether

Whether I am or am not better, the town is quiet, and every body sleeps in quiet, except a few who please themselves with guarding us now the danger is over. Perkins seems to have managed with great dexterity. Every body, I believe, now sees, that if the tumult had been opposed immediately, it had been immediately suppressed; and we are therefore now better provided against an insurrection, than if none had happened.

*Maccaroni dopo
passo.*

I hope you, and Master, and Queeney, and Burney, are all well. I was contented last night to send an excuse to Vesey, and two days ago another to Mrs. Horneck; you may think I was bad, if you thought about it; and why should you not think about me who am so often thinking about you, and your appurtenances. But there is no gratitude in this world.

*he spoke more
truth than he
thought.*

But I could tell you, Doris, if I would;
And since you treat me so, methinks I should.

So sings the sublime and pathetick Mr. Walsh. Well! and I will tell you too. Among the heroes of the Borough, who twice a-day perambulate, or perequitate High-street and

the Clink, rides that renowned and redoubted knight, Sir Richard Hotham. There is magnanimity, which defies every danger that is past, and publick spirit, that stands sentinel over property that he does not own. Tell me no more of the self-devoted Decii, or of the leap of Curtius. Let fame talk henceforward with all her tongues of Hotham the Hat-maker.

almost every body was then a Hotham.

I was last week at Renny's conversatione, and Renny got her room pretty well filled; and there were Mrs. Ord, and Mrs. Horneck, and Mrs. Bunbury, and other illustrious names, and much would poor Renny have given to have had Mrs. Thrale too, and Queeny, and Burney: but human happiness is never perfect; there is always une vuide affreuse, as Maintenon complained, there is some craving void left aking in the breast. Renny is going to Ramsgate; and thus the world drops away, and I am left in the sultry town, to see the sun in the crab, and perhaps in the lion, while you are paddling with the Nereids.

Johnson ought to have written un vuide affreux, and the madam ought have so corrected the phrase: but I have some notion, that he wrote it right, and the ignorant woman made it wrong, thinking she was doing it right.

I am, &c.

LETTER CCXLVI.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM, Wednesday, June 21, 1780.

NOW you come to a settled place I have some inclination to write to you; for in writing after you there was no pleasure. All is quiet; and that quietness is now more likely to continue than if it had never been disturbed. ———'s case, if it be not affected, is ridiculous; but there is in the world much tenderness where there is no misfortune, and much courage where there is no danger.

My cold is grown better, but is not quite well, nor bad enough now to be complained of. I wish I had been with you to see the Isle of Wight; but I shall perhaps go some time without you, and then we shall be even.

What you told me of Mr. Middleton frightened me; but I am still of my old opinion, that a semivegetable diet will keep all well. I have dined on Monday and to-day only on peas.

I sup-

I suppose the town grows empty, for I have no invitations; and I begin to wish for something, I hardly know what: but I should like to move when every body is moving; and yet I purpose to stay till the work is done, which I take little care to do. *Sic labitur ætas.*

The world is full of troubles. Mrs. — has just been with me to get a surgeon to her daughter; the girl that Mrs. Cumins rejected, who has received a kick from a horse, that has broken five fore-teeth on the upper side. The world is likewise full of escapes; had the blow been a little harder it had killed her.

It was a twelvemonth last Sunday since the convulsions in my breast left me. I hope I was thankful when I recollected it: by removing that disorder, a great improvement was made in the enjoyment of life. I am now as well as men at my age can expect to be, and I yet think I shall be better.

I have had with me a brother of —, *Boswell,*
a Spanish merchant, whom the war has driven
from his residence at Valencia; he is gone to
see his friends, and will find Scotland but a

M 2

forry

*28,
dys
ions,
and
he*

forry place after twelve years residence in a happier climate. He is a very agreeable man, and speaks no Scotch.

*Strange that no
body would tell
the rich man his
poor were agricultural!*

Keep Master to his diet, and tell him that his illwillers are very unwilling to think that he can ever sit more in parliament, but by caution and resolution he may see many parliaments. Pay my respects to Queeney and Burney. Living so apart we shall get no credit by our studies; but I hope to see you all again some time. Do not let separation make us forget one another.

I am, &c.

LETTER CCXLVII.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

London, July 4, 1780.

You are too happy for any body but yourself to travel in such pretty company, and leave every thing safe behind you, and find every thing well when you arrive; and yet I question if you are quite contented, though

though every body envies you. Keep my *that is, keep him*
master tight in his geers, for if he breaks loose *from eating too*
the mischief will be very extensive. *much: but that*
no body could do:
He was an unweary
glutton.

Your account of Mr. S—— and of Miss
O—— is very melancholy; I wish them both
their proper relief from their several maladies.
But I am glad that Queeney continues well;
and hope she will not be too rigorous with
the young ones, but allow them to be happy
their own way; for what better way will they
ever find?

C'est que l'enfant toujours est homme;
C'est que l'homme est toujours enfant.

I have not seen or done much since I had
the misfortune of seeing you go away. I was
one night at Burney's. There were Pepys,
and there were Mrs. Ord, and Paradise, and
Hoole, and Dr. Dunbar of Aberdeen, and I
know not how many more. And Pepys and
I had all the talk.

To-day called on me the Dean of Hereford,
who says that the barley-harvest is likely to
be very abundant. There is something for
our consolation. Don't forget that I am,

Dear Madam,

Your, &c.

M 3

LETTER CCXLVIII.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

London, July 10, 1780.

*half his usual
quantity would
have been enough
for two.*

IF Mr. Thrale eats but half his usual quan-
tity, he can hardly eat too much. It were
better however to have some rule, and some
security. Last week I saw flesh but twice, and
I think fish once, the rest was pease.

*Oh, she was a great
Physician! Most of
her children knew
it to their cost.*

You are afraid, you say, lest I extenuate
myself too fast, and are an enemy to violence;
but did you never hear nor read, dear Ma-
dam, that every man has his *genius*, and that
the great rule by which all excellence is at-
tained, and all success procured, is, to follow
genius; and have you not observed in all our
conversations that my *genius* is always in ex-
tremes; that I am very noisy, or very silent;
very gloomy, or very merry; very sour, or
very kind? And would you have me cross
my *genius*, when it leads me sometimes to vo-
racity and sometimes to abstinence? You know
that

that the oracle said follow your *genius*. When we get together again, (but when alas will that be?) you can manage me, and spare me the solicitude of managing myself.

Poor Miss O—— called on me on Saturday, with that fond and tender application which is natural to misery, when it looks to every body for that help which nobody can give. I was melted; and soothed and counselled her as well as I could, and am to visit her to-morrow.

She gave a very honourable account of my dear Queeney; and says of my master, that she thinks his manner and temper more altered than his looks, but of this alteration she could give no particular account; and all that she could say ended in this, that he is now sleepy in the morning. I do not wonder at the scantiness of her narration, she is too busy within to turn her eyes abroad.

I am glad that Pepys is come, but hope *he had no just* that resolute temperance will make him un- *ground for that* necessary. *hope with regard* I doubt he can do no good to poor *to Thrale, who* *never minded* Mr. Scrase.

M 4

I stay *Sir Richard Jebb,* *Mr. Pepys, or* *any other body's* *advice or directions,* *but would eat and* *sleep whenever he* *chose.*

*This paragraph pains
him to the very life.*

I stay at home to work, and yet do not work diligently; nor can tell when I shall have done, nor perhaps does any body but myself wish me to have done; for what can they hope I shall do better? yet I wish the work was over, and I was at liberty. And what would I do if I was at liberty? Would I go to Mrs. Aston and Mrs. Porter, and see the old places, and sigh to find that my old friends are gone? Would I recal plans of life which I never brought into practice, and hopes of excellence which I once presumed, and never have attained? Would I compare what I now am with what I once expected to have been? Is it reasonable to wish for suggestions of shame, and opportunities of sorrow?

If you please, Madam, we will have an end of this, and contrive some other wishes. I wish I had you in an evening, and I wish I had you in a morning; and I wish I could have a little talk, and see a little frolick. For all this I must stay, but life will not stay,

I will

DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON. 169

I will end my letter and go to Blackmore's life, when I have told you that

I am, &c.

LETTER CCXLIX.

To Mrs. THRALE.

London, July 27, 1780.

AND thus it is, Madam, that you serve me. After having kept me a whole week hoping and hoping, and wondering and wondering, what could have stopped your hand from writing, comes a letter to tell me, that I suffer by my own fault. As if I might not correspond with my Queeney, and we might not tell one another our minds about politicks or morals, or any thing else. Queeney and I are both steady, and may be trusted; we are none of the giddy gabblers, we think before we speak.

I am

170 LETTERS TO AND FROM

I am afraid that I shall hardly find my way this summer into the country, though the number of my Lives now grows less. I will send you two little volumes in a few days.

As the workmen are still at Streatham, there is no likelihood of seeing you and my master in any short time; but let my master be where he will so he be well. I am not, I believe, any fatter than when you saw me, and hope to keep corpulence away; for I am so lightsome and so airy, and can so walk, you would talk of it if you were to see me. I do not always sleep well; but I have no pain nor sickness in the night. Perhaps I only sleep ill because I am too long a-bed.

That was true enough.

I dined yesterday at Sir Joshua's with Mrs. Cholmondely, and she told me, I was the best critick in the world; and I told her, that nobody in the world could judge like her of the merit of a critick.

On Sunday I was with Dr. Lawrence and his two sisters-in-law, to dine with Mr. G—— at Putney. The Doctor cannot hear in a coach better than in a room, and it was but a

Gawler

dull day; only I saw two crownbirds, paltry
creatures, and a red curlew.

*very rare and
singular birds:
but Johnson cared for
little but books, and
more books.*

Every body is gone out of town, only I am
left behind, and know not when I shall see
either Naiad or Dryad; however, it is as it
has commonly been, I have no complaint to
make but of myself. I have been idle, and
of idleness can come no goodness.

Mrs. Williams was frighted from London
as you were frighted from Bath. She is come
back, as she thinks, better. Mrs. Desmoulins
has a disorder resembling an asthma; which I
am for curing with calomel and jalap, but Mr.
Levet treats it with antimonial wine. Mr.
Levet keeps on his legs stout, and walks, I
suppose, ten miles a-day.

*Madam ought to
have forbore the
very naming of
antimonial wine.*

I stick pretty well to diet, and desire my
master may be told of it; for no man said
oftener than he, that *the less we eat the bet-
ter.*

Poor ———, after having thrown away
Lord ———'s patronage and three hundred
a-year, has had another disappointment. He
procured a recommendation from Lord ———
to the Governor of Jamaica; but to make this
useful,

useful, something was to be done by the Bishop of London, which has been refused. Thus is the world filled with hope and fear, and struggle, and disappointment.

Pray do you never add to the other vexations, any diminution of your kindness for,

Madam,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R C C L.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

M A D A M,

London, August 1, 1780.

I HAD your letter about Mr. S—— and Miss O——; but there was nothing to which I had any answer, or to which any answer could be made.

This afternoon Dr. Lawrence drank tea, and, as he always does, asked about Mr. Thrale; I told him how well he was when I heard; and he does not eat too much, said the Doctor; I said, not often; and the return was,

was, that he who in that case should once eat too much, might eat no more. I keep my rule very well; and, I think, continue to grow better.

they never would tell the rich man what his case was.

Tell my pretty dear Queeney, that when we meet again, we will have, at least for some time, two lessons in a day. I love her, and think on her when I am alone; hope we shall be very happy together, and mind our books.

Johnson had a great notion, that knowing latin would make women better: but, as far as my observation has gone, latin profits nine women out of ten, by making them pedantic and ostentatious.

Now August and Autumn are begun, and the Virgin takes possession of the sky. Will the Virgin do any thing for a man of seventy? I have a great mind to end my work under the Virgin.

I have sent two volumes to Mr. Perkins to be sent to you, and beg you to send them back as soon as you have all done with them. I let the first volume get to the Reynolds's, and could never get it again.

I sent to Lord Westcote about his brother's life, but he says he knows not whom to employ; and is sure I shall do him no injury. There is an ingenious scheme to save a day's work, or part of a day, utterly defeated. Then what avails it to be wise? The plain and the artful man must both do their own

If Johnson, so idle was he, and such an enemy to work, had found any body willing to write any of the Lives of the Poets for him, he would have written very few.

174 LETTERS TO AND FROM

*C, And so he did, and
h so much the worse
for his volumes.* work.—But I think I have got a life of Dr. Young.

Susy and Sophy have had a fine Summer; it is a comfort to think that somebody is happy. And they make verses, and act plays.

Mrs. Montague is, I think, in town, and has sent Mrs. Williams her annuity: but I hear nothing from her, but I may be contented if I hear from you, for

I am, &c.

LETTER CCLI.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

August 8, 1780.

*Some body offered
to write an
appendage to
the life of Granville
after his doing it:
but that did not
square with his
idleness, as he
wanted to save
himself the trouble
of writing that life.*

WHAT do you scold so for about Granville's life; do you not see that the appendage neither gains nor saves any thing to me? I shall have Young's life given me, to spite you.

Methinks it was pity to send the girls to school; they have indeed had a fine vacation,
dear

DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON. 175

dear loves, but if it had been longer it had been still finer.

Did Master read my books? You say nothing of him in this letter; but I hope he is well, and growing every day nearer to perfect health. When do you think of coming home?

I have not yet persuaded myself to work, and therefore know not when my work will be done. Yet I have a mind to see Lichfield. Dr. Taylor seems to be well. He has written to me without a syllable of his lawsuit.

You have heard in the papers how * * * is come to age; I have enclosed a short song of congratulation, which you must not show to any body. It is odd that it should come into any body's head. I hope you will read it with candour; it is, I believe, one of the author's first essays in that way of writing, and a beginner is always to be treated with tenderness.

My two gentlewomen are both complaining. Mrs. Desmoulins had a mind of Dr. Turton; I sent for him, and he has prescribed for Mrs. Williams, but I do not find that he
promises

176 LETTERS TO AND FROM

promises himself much credit from either of them.

I hope it will not be long before I shall have another little volume for you, and still there will be work undone. If it were not for these Lives, I think I could not forbear coming to look at you, now you have room for me. But I still think to stay till I have cleared my hands.

Queeney is not good. She seldom writes to me, and yet I love her, and I love you all, for

I am, &c.

LETTER CCLII.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

August 14, 1780.

I HOPE my dear Queeney's suspicions are groundless. Whenever any alteration of manner happens, I believe a small cathartick will set all right.

I hope

I hope you have no design of stealing away to Italy before the election, nor of leaving me behind you; though I am not only Seventy, but Seventy-one. Could not you let me lose a year in round numbers? Sweetly, sweetly, sings Dr. Swift,

Some dire misfortune to portend,
No enemy can match a friend.

But what if I am Seventy-two; I remember Sulpitius says of Saint Martin (now that's above your reading), *Eft animus victor annorum, et senectuti cedere nescius*. Match me that among your young folks. If you try to plague me, I shall tell you that, according to Galen, life begins to decline from *Thirty-five*.

But as we go off, others come on: Queeney's last letter was very pretty. What a hussley she is to write so seldom. She has no events, then let her write sentiment as you and I do; and sentiment you know is inexhaustible.

If you want events, here is Mr. Levet just come in at fourscore from a walk to Hampstead, eight miles, in August. This, however, is all that I have to tell you, except that I

178 LETTERS TO AND FROM

have three bunches of grapes on a vine in my garden; at least, this is all that I will now tell of my garden.

Both my females are ill, both very ill; Mrs. Desmoulins thought that she wished for Dr. Turton; and I sent for him, and then took him to Mrs. Williams, and he prescribes for both, though without much hope of benefiting either. Yet physick has its powers: you see that I am better; and Mr. Shaw will maintain, that he and I saved my master. But if he is to live always away from us, what did we get by saving him? If we cannot live together, let us hear; when I have no letter from Brighthelmston, think how I fret, and write oftener; you write to this body and to that, and nobody loves you like

Your, &c.

L E T T E R CCLIII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

August 18, 1780.

I LOST no time, and have enclosed our conversation. You write of late very seldom. I wish you would write upon *subjects*; any thing to keep alive. You have your beaux, and your flatterers, and here am poor I forced to flatter myself; and any good of myself I am not very easy to believe, so that I really live but a sorry life. What shall I do with Lyttelton's life? I can make a short life, and a short criticism, and conclude. Why did not you like Collins, and Gay, and Blackmore, as well as Akenfide?

She had a beam, of whom Johnson never suspected, no more than Mr. Thrale. They were both too proud to look so low as Piorri: yet Piorri married her, or she married him as soon as it was in her power.

I am, Madam,

Your, &c.

LETTER CCLIV.

Mrs. THRALE to Dr. JOHNSON.

August 20.

*and that was Pizzini:
but she was pure Johnson
could not guess.*

I WILL try, my dear Sir, to make you some amends, by writing at least one very long letter; but indeed I can think only of one thing, whatever I may say.

Pizzini, Pizzini, by Joseph!

Do you recollect our laughing fifteen years ago at a gawkee girl of seventeen? who, when her toast was called for at a city table crowded with coarse men—they were drinking sentiments—Is not, says she, this a pretty health—What we think on most, and talk on least. I am come pretty much to her case: for it is not right to speak of that which never fails to keep pressing upon my spirits, and preying upon my mind. Without frequent bleedings, there is however danger on one side, and by bleeding frequently, we induce as certain a danger on the other.—We had a visit yesterday from Mr. R——; whom perhaps

haps you remember, perhaps not: but our morning conversation with him will not be easily forgotten by me, I thought it would drive me wild upon the spot. In such a case, can there be any fears of my stealing away to Italy without you? when I should not think you, nor twenty more such friends if I could find them, sufficient to guard us from the hazard of wild exploits. Whoever is sick, is surely safest at home; and have we not mortifications enough already, without going where one might be amused, in order to be miserable? Oh no, let us be miserable in the old places, and not pollute scenes of pleasure with objects of sorrow.

Well! as you say, Queeney is beginning life, and so far very happily, as it is begun under your tuition: she appears to me proud of your partiality; and, I dare say, will try long to deserve it. You are getting quite well as it appears; and when we meet, we shall see *viator annorum*. The Lives will be a standing proof of your powers after the grand climacterick; and you make gay impromptus upon the boys, instead of sitting down like common mortals at seventy, and letting the boys make gay impromptus upon you.

when Thrale found himself worse and worse, he thought of going to Italy, and spoke of it incessantly, and would have me with him, and desired me to keep ready: but he had recompensed me so generously for my attending him to Paris, and I had so much trouble on that journey, that I always put him off when he harped upon that string: besides, that I knew his wife agreed only in appearance to go the journey, and would cross his resolution under hand, as she was then quite run mad with Paozzi, and gave me strong reasons to suspect, that her madness carried her all lengths.

Blackmore's life is admirable; who says I don't like it? I like all the Whig lives prodigiously: Akenfide's best of the little one's, for the sake of a pretty disquisition upon ridicule that pleased me particularly, and that elegant stricture on the Pleasures of Imagination; which will probably be much read and admired by every one. It is my sincere opinion that Milton, and Blackmore, and Thomson, would have been all contented with what you have said of *them*, though the admirers of Lycidas will be angry no doubt.

The censures of Milton's republican spirit would scarce have shocked him: he knew himself to be acrimonious and furly; like Young's Buphris, who called himself the Proud, and gloried in it.

Your account of his domestick behaviour, however, puts me in mind of the fierce fellow in a droll book called *Pompey the Little*, who comes home from the publick house, where he had been vapouring and storming away about liberty of speech—and treats his poor wife with the most brutal tyranny, only because she just says, *Indeed, my dear, I don't understand politicks*. Your harsh expressions of wrath against the author are, after all, so

buried under the majestick praises bestowed upon Paradise Lost, that even *I* am forced to forgive them. Poor dear Dr. Collier used always to bring that poem forward as a testimony to the excellence of Toryism; for, says he, you may observe that 'tis wholly formed upon *our* principles of obedience and subordination; and I half wish, for the sake of my first friend, whose memory I shall for ever revere, that his remark had been preserved in this work of your's, which will doubtless be disseminated far and wide; and, for ought I know, take possession of the lands on which it lights, as Don Sebastian said of the dust that his body when dead would be dried into.

And now if *you* call this flattery, I can leave off in a minute without bidding; for since you *lions* have no skill in dandling the kid, we *kids* can expect but rough returns for caresses bestowed upon our haughty monarch—So be diligent, dear Sir, and have done with these men that have been buried these hundred years, and don't fit making verses that never will be written, but sit down steadily and finish their lives who *did* do something; and then think a little about mine, which has not been a happy one, for all you teize me so

Johnson was always making Latin or English verses in his mind, but never would write them down.

concerning the pleasures I enjoy, and the flattery I receive, all which has nothing to do with comfort for the present distress, and sometimes I am angry when I read such stuff. That your two Sultanas are sick is very uncomfortable for you; may be Dr. Turton may do them good: I never saw Dr. Turton, but my heart, like Clarissa's, naturally leans towards a physician. *Le medicin et le curè*, as the French themselves, who have gayer hearts than mine, confess, are the last earthly objects on which the human hopes and human eyes are to be fixed: and it is somewhat unfair not to let them take up a little of our affections beforehand.

*A mighty Physician
she thought herself,
and her favorite
book was James's
Medical Dictionary,
from which she
learnt the use of
antimonial wine.*

If we do go to Michelgrove, Hester will write all one; she is very attentive to her father, very dutiful, and very wise. I hope my anxiety is concealed from her pretty well, it would be exceedingly wrong to depress her spirits, and very dangerous to her health.

I am most sincerely, dear Sir,

Your faithful servant,

H. L. THRALE.

The conversation you inclosed I could have written myself; as Juliet says, Yea, but all this did I know before.

L E T T E R CCLV.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM, London, August 24, 1780.

I DO not wonder that you can think and write but of one thing. Yet concerning that thing you may be less uneasy, as you are now in the right way. You are at least doing, what I was always desirous to have you do, and which, when despair put an end to the caution of men going in the dark, produced at last all the good that has been obtained. Gentle purges, and slight phlebotomies, are not my favourites; they are pop-gun batteries, which lose time and effect nothing. It was by bleeding till he fainted, that his life was saved. I would, however, now have him trust chiefly to vigorous and stimulating cathartics. To bleed, is only proper when there is no time for slower remedies.

Does he sleep in the night? if he sleeps, there is not much danger; any thing like
wake-

wakefulness in a man either by nature or habit so uncommonly sleepy, would put me in great fear. Do not now hinder him from sleeping whenever heaviness comes upon him. Quiet rest, light food, and strong purges, will, I think, set all right. Be you vigilant, but be not frightened.

Of Mr. R—— I very well remember all but the name. “He had a nice discernment of loss and gain.” This I thought a power not hard to be attained. What kept him out then must keep him out now; the want of a place for him. Mr. P—— then observed, that there was nothing upon which he could be employed. Matters will never be carried to extremities. Mr. P—— cannot be discharged, and he will never suffer a superiour. That voluntary submission to a new mind is not a heroick quality; but it has always been among us, and therefore I mind it less.

There was no danger of that. She expected her husband's death every day, and saw Biozzi every day.

The expedition to foreign parts you will not much encourage, and you need not, I think, make any great effort to oppose it; for it is as likely to put us out of the way to mischief, as to bring us into it. We can have no projects

projects in Italy. Exercise may relieve the body, and variety will amuse the mind. The expence will not be greater than at home in the regular course of life. And we shall be safe from B—— and G——, and all instigators to schemes of waste. *Si te fata ferant, fer fata.*

The chief wish that I form is, that Mr. Thrale could be made to understand his true state: to know that he is tottering upon a point; to consider every change of his mental character as the symptom of a disease; to distrust any opinions or purposes that shoot up in his thoughts; to think that violent mirth is the foam, and deep sadness the subsidence of a morbid fermentation; to watch himself, and counteract by experienced remedies every new tendency, or uncommon sensation. This is a new and an ungrateful employment; but without this self-examination he never can be safe. You must try to teach it, and he to learn it gradually, and in this my sweet Queeney must help you; I am glad to hear of her vigilance and observation. She is my pupil.

*that no body
would do.*

I suppose the S—— scheme is now past; I saw no great harm in it, though perhaps no good. Do not suffer little things to embarrass
you.

you. Our great work is constant temperance, and frequent, very frequent evacuation; and that they may not be interrupted, conviction of their necessity is to be prudently inculcated.

I am not at present so much distressed as you, because I think your present method likely to be efficacious. Dejection may indeed follow, and I should dread it from too copious bleeding; for as purges are more under command, and more concurrent with the agency of nature, they seldom effect any irremediable change. However, we must expect after such a disease, that the mind will fluctuate long before it finds its center.

I will not tell you, nor Master, nor Queeney, how I long to be among you; but I would be glad to know when we are to meet, and hope our meeting will be cheerful.

I am, dearest Lady,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R CCLVI.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM, London, August 25, 1780.

YESTERDAY I could write but about one thing. I am sorry to find from my dear Queeney's letter to-day, that Mr. Thrale's sleep was too much shortened. He begins however now, she says, to recover it. Sound sleep will be the surest token of returning health. The swelling of his legs has nothing in it dangerous; it is the natural consequence of lax muscles, and when the laxity is known to be artificial, need not give any uneasiness. I told you so formerly. Every thing that I have told you about my dear master has been true. Let him take purgatives, and let him sleep. Bleeding seems to have been necessary now; but it was become necessary only by the omission of purges. Bleeding is only for exigences.

I wish you or Queeney would write to me every post, while the danger lasts. I will come if I can do any good, or prevent any evil.

For

For any other purpose, I suppose, now poor Sam: may be spared; you are regaled with Greek and Latin, and you are *Thralia Castalio semper amata choro*; and you have a daughter equal to yourself. I shall have enough to do with one and the other. Your admirer has more Greek than poetry; he was however worth the conquest, though you had conquered me. Whether you can hold him as fast, there may be *some dram of a scruple*, for he thinks you have full tongue enough, as appears by some of his verses; he will leave you for somebody that will let him take his turn, and then I may come in again: for, I tell you, nobody loves you so well, and therefore never think of changing like the moon, and *being constant only in your inconstancy*.

I have not dined out for some time but with Renny or Sir Joshua; and next week Sir Joshua goes to Devonshire, and Renny to Richmond, and I am left by myself. I wish I could say *nunquam minus*, &c. but I am not diligent.

I am afraid that I shall not see Lichfield this year, yet it would please me to shew my friends how much better I am grown: but I am not grown, I am afraid, less idle; and of idleness I am now paying the fine by having no leisure.

Does

*She conquered him
with no great diffi-
culty, as all women
conquer Simpleton:
and a Simpleton
he was in spight
of all his mental
powers, as the
event proved it
at last.*

DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON. 191

Does the expedition to Sir John Shelly's go on? The first week of September is now at no great distance; nor the eighteenth day, which concludes another of my wretched years. It is time to have done.

I am, &c.

LETTER CCLVII.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAREST MADAM,

London, April 5, 1781.

OF your injunctions, to pray for you and write to you, I hope to leave neither unobserved; and I hope to find you willing in a short time to alleviate your trouble by some other exercise of the mind. I am not without my part of the calamity. No death since that of my wife has ever oppressed me like this. But let us remember, that we are in the hands of Him who knows when to give and when to take away; who will look upon us with mercy through all our variations of existence, and who invites us to call on him in the day of trouble. Call upon him in this

great

Mr Thrale died the day before early in the morning. Johnson, and I, and many other friends, were to dine with him that day, and in the afternoon some Perses and Bramias were to come to a concert at his house, that had been planned by her and Pierzi. Two hours after his death she ran away with Hedy to Brighton, after having imparted him the news, and this is his answer to her short note.

great revolution of life, and call with confidence. You will then find comfort for the past, and support for the future. He that has given you happiness in marriage, to a degree of which, without personal knowledge, I should have thought the description fabulous, can give you another mode of happiness as a mother; and at last, the happiness of losing all temporal cares in the thoughts of an eternity in heaven.

*What stuff he wrote
for want of knowing
her character! she
was all this while
laughing.*

*He was a very good
man, and a very
good husband, and
a very good father,
and a very good
man in every way.*

I do not exhort you to reason yourself into tranquillity. We must first pray, and then labour; first implore the blessing of God, and those means which he puts into our hands. Cultivated ground has few weeds; a mind occupied by lawful business, has little room for useless regret.

We read the will to-day; but I will not fill my first letter with any other account than that, with all my zeal for your advantage, I am satisfied; and that the other executors, more used to consider property than I, commended it for wisdom and equity. Yet why should I not tell you that you have five hundred pounds for your immediate expences, and two thousand pounds a-year, with both the houses and all the goods?

*These were the
most comfortable
news he could
impart, considering
by what demon
he was now
possessed.*

Let us pray for one another, that the time, whether long or short, that shall yet be granted us, may be well spent; and that when this life, which at the longest is very short, shall come to an end, a better may begin which shall never end.

I am, dearest Madam,
Your, &c.

she speaks is, if not very well, to her liking at least: but poor Johnson, holy Johnson, never perceived, that she was a lump of hypocrisy and lust. He thought her only vain, and apt to tell lies.

LETTER CCLVIII.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

April 7, 1781.

I HOPE you begin to find your mind grow clearer. My part of the loss hangs upon me. I have lost a friend of boundless kindness at an age when it is very unlikely that I should find another.

If you think change of place likely to relieve you, there is no reason why you should not go to Bath; the distances are unequal, but with regard to practice and business they

VOL. II.

O

are

are the same. It is a day's journey from either place; and the post is more expeditious and certain to Bath. Consult only your own inclination, for there is really no other principle of choice. God direct and bless you.

Why these abbreviations? While affairs were settling at the Borough, Perkins told the Executors, that he could not touch any of the moneys there without an order from the Executors to carry on the business, and Caror upon this desired Perkins to draw upon him for any money he might want. This was not only fair, but kind to her and the other heirs. Why therefore give in an air of mystery by her initials?

Mr. C^{Caror} has offered Mr. P^{Perkins} money, but it was not wanted. I hope we shall all do all we can to make you less unhappy, and you must do all you can for yourself. What we, or what you can do, will for a time be but little; yet certainly that calamity which may be considered as doomed to fall inevitably on half mankind, is not finally without alleviation.

It is something for me, that as I have not the decrepitude I have not the callousness of old age. I hope in time to be less afflicted.

I am, &c.

LETTER CCLIX.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAREST MADAM, London, April 9, 1781.

THAT you are gradually recovering your tranquillity, is the effect to be humbly expected from trust in God. Do not represent life as darker than it is. Your loss has been very great, but you retain more than almost any other can hope to possess. You are high in the opinion of mankind; you have children from whom much pleasure may be expected; and that you will find many friends, you have no reason to doubt. Of my friendship, be it worth more or less, I hope you think yourself certain, without much art or care. It will not be easy for me to repay the benefits that I have received; but I hope to be always ready at your call. Our sorrow has different effects; you are withdrawn into solitude, and I am driven into company. I am afraid of thinking what I have lost. I

O 2

never

She wanted no other company but Pizzi: therefore kept her words at a distance; and Miss Thrale knew it very well, and pined and fretted about it: But what could she do, cold and reserved as she always was?

He would have had many: but he, like the vulgar, loves better to have a rich friend, than a thousand poor rich, though the rich one never did any thing for him, but welcome him to his table.

never had such a friend before. Let me have your prayers and those of my dear Queeney. The prudence and resolution of your design to return so soon to your business and your duty deserves great praise; I shall communicate it on Wednesday to the other executors. Be pleased to let me know whether you would have me come to Streatham to receive you, or stay here till the next day.

I am, &c.

LETTER CCLX.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

London, April 11, 1781.

I AM glad to hear from my dear Miss, that you have recovered tranquillity enough to think on bathing; but there is no disposition in the world to leave you long to yourself. Mr. P_A—— pretends that your absence produces a thousand difficulties which I believe it does not produce. He frights Mr. C * * *.
Mr.

Perkin

*a Lator. Here again
are initials quite
unnecessary, if she does
not intend malicious
innuendos.*

Mr. C—— is of my mind, that there is no need of hurry. I would not have this opportunity give you any alarm or disturbance; but, to pacify it, come as soon as you can prevail upon your mind to mingle with business. I think business the best remedy for grief as soon as it can be admitted.

She had no grief, though she had business enough, especially at night, after her coming to Streatham.

We met to day, and were told of mountainous difficulties, till I was provoked to tell them, that if there were really so much to do and suffer, there would be no executors in the world. Do not suffer yourself to be terrified.

I comfort you, and hope God will bless and support you; but I feel myself like a man beginning a new course of life. I had interwoven myself with my dear friend; but our great care ought to be, that we may be fit and ready, when in a short time we shall be called to follow him.

Johnson was a Simpleton. She knew how to comfort herself without the assistance of God.

There is, however, no use in communicating to you my heaviness of heart. I thank dear Miss for her letter.

I am, &c.

LETTER CCLXI.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAREST MADAM, London, April 12, 1781.

YOU will not suppose that much has happened since last night, nor indeed is this a time for talking much of loss and gain. The business of Christians is now for a few days in their own bosoms. God grant us to do it properly. I hope you gain ground on your affliction. I hope to overcome mine. You and Miss must comfort one another. May you long live happily together. I have nobody whom I expect to share my uneasiness, nor, if I could communicate it, would it be less. I give it little vent, and amuse it as I can. Let us pray for one another. And, when we meet, we may try what fidelity and tenderness will do for us,

*I cannot help
laughing at all
this simplicity
of Johnson.*

*Johnson never
grieved much for
any thing. His trade
was wisdom.*

There is no wisdom in useless and hopeless sorrow; but there is something in it so like virtue, that he who is wholly without it cannot be loved, nor will by me at least be thought worthy of esteem. My next letter will be to Queeney.

I am, &c.

LETTER CCLXII.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

April 14, 1781.

MY intention was to have written this day to my dear Queeney; but I have just heard from you, and therefore this letter shall be yours. I am glad that you find the behaviour of your acquaintance such as you can commend. The world is not so unjust or unkind as it is peevishly represented. Those who deserve well seldom fail to receive from others such services as they can perform; but few have much in their power, or are so stationed as to have great leisure from their own affairs, and kindness must be commonly the exuberance of content. The wretched have no compassion, they can do good only from strong principles of duty.

I purpose to receive you at Streatham, but wonder that you come so soon.

*She did not know
that she wanted
to be within reach*

O 4

I sent of her paramour.

I sent immediately to Mr. Perkins to send you twenty pounds, and intended to secure you from disappointment by inclosing a note in this; but yours written on Wednesday 11th, came not till Saturday the 14th, and mine written to-night, will not come before you leave Brighthelmston, unless you have put Monday next for Monday sevensnight, which I suspect, as you mention no alteration of your mind.

I am, &c.

LETTER CCLXIII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

April 17, 1781.

MR. Norris (Mr. Robson's partner) promised to send the will to-morrow; you will therefore have it before you have this letter. When you have talked with Mr. Scrase, write diligently down all that you can remember, and, where you have any difficulties, ask him again, and rather stay where
8
you

you are a few days longer than come away with imperfect information.

The executors will hardly meet till you come, for we have nothing to do till we go all together to prove the will.

I have not had a second visit from Mr. ———, for he found his discourse to me very unavailing. I was dry; but if he goes to ——— he will be overpowered with words as good as his own. ——— appears a very modest inoffensive man, not likely to give any trouble. The difficulty of finding executors Mr. Scrase has formerly told you, and among all your acquaintance, except P———, whom you pressed into the service, and who would perhaps have deserted it, I do not see with whom you could have been more commodiously connected. They all mean well, and will, I think, all concur.

Miss told me that you intended to bathe; it is right: all external things are diversions: let her bathe too. I regain that tranquillity which irremediable misfortunes necessarily admit, and do not, I hope, think on what I have lost, without grateful recollection of what I have enjoyed.

I am, &c.

LETTER CCLXIV.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

London, April 16, 1781.

AS I was preparing this day to go to Streat-
ham, according to the direction of your
letter of the 11th, which I could not know,
though I suspected it, to be erroneous, I re-
ceived two letters, of which the first effect
was, that it saved me a fruitless journey. Of
these letters, that which I perceive to have
been written first has no date of time or place;
the second was written on the 14th, but they
came together.

I forbore, because I would not disturb you,
to tell you, that last week Mr. — came to
talk about partnership, and was very copious.
I dismissed him with nothing harsher than,
that I was not convinced.

You will have much talk to hear. Mr.

*A Cator, one
of the Executors,
and the only one
that has acted
as such. Happy
for him, that he was
thought of in the will.*

C^A — speaks with great exuberance, but
what he says, when at last he says it, is com-
monly

monly right. Mr. ^{Perkin.}—— made an oration flaming with the terrifick, which I discovered to have no meaning at all; for the result was, that if we stopped payment we should lose credit.

I have written to Mr. Robson to send the will. There were two copies, but I know not who has them.

You are to receive five hundred pounds immediately. Mr. Scrase shall certainly see the will, if you and I go to Brighthelmston on purpose, which, if we have any difficulty, may be our best expedient.

I am encouraged, dearest lady, by your spirit. The season for *agues* is now over. You are in your civil character a man. You may sue and be sued. If you apply to business perhaps half the mind which you have exercised upon knowledge and elegance, you will need little help, what help however I can give you, will, I hope, be always at call.

(Make my compliments to Mr. Scrase.)

I am, &c.

LETTER CCLXV.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM, Oxford, Oct. 17, 1781.

ON Monday evening arrived at the Angel Inn at Oxford, Mr. Johnson and Mr. Barber, without any sinister accident.

*That is Francis
Barber his black
Servant.*

I am here ; but why am I here ? On my way to Lichfield, where I believe Mrs. Afton will be glad to see me. We have known each other long, and, by consequence, are both old ; and she is paralytick ; and if I do not see her soon, I may see her no more in this world. To make a visit on such considerations is to go on a melancholy errand. But such is the course of life.

This place is very empty, but there are more here whom I know, than I could have expected. Young Burke has just been with me, and I have dined to day with Dr. Adams, who seems fond of me. But I have not been very well. I hope I am not ill by sympathy,
and

DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON. 205

and that you are making haste to recover your plumpness and your complexion. I left you *skinny and lean*.

To-morrow, if I can, I shall go forward, and when I see Lichfield I shall write again.

Mr. Parker, the bookseller, sends his respects to you: I send mine to the young ladies.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R CCLXVI.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM, Lichfield, Oct. 20, 1781.

I WROTE from Oxford, where I staid two days; on Thursday I went to Birmingham, and was told by Hector that I should not be well so soon as I expected; but that well I should be. Mrs. Careless took me under her care, and told me when I had tea enough. On Friday I came hither, and have escaped the post-chaises all the way. Every body here is as kind as I expected, I think Lucy is kinder

kinder than ever. I am very well. Now we are both valetudinary, we shall have something to write about. We can tell each other our complaints, and give reciprocal comfort and advice, as—not to eat too much—and—not to drink too little, and we may now and then add a few strictures of reproof: and so we may write and write till we can find another subject. Pray make my compliments to all the ladies, great and little.

I am, &c.

LETTER CCLXVII.

To Mrs THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

Lichfield, Oct. 23, 1781.

I HAD both your letters, and very little good news in either of them. The diminution of the estate, though unpleasing and unexpected, must be borne, because it cannot be helped; but I do not apprehend why the other part of your income should fall short. I understood that you were to have 1,500 l.

yearly from the money arising from the sale,
and that your claim was first.

I sincerely applaud your resolution not to run
out, and wish you always to save something,
for that which is saved may be spent at will,
and the advantages are very many of saving
some money loose and unappropriated. If
your ammunition is always ready, you may
shoot advantage as it starts, or pleasure as it
flies. Resolve therefore never to want mo-
ney.

The Gravedo is not removed, nor does it
increase. My nights have commonly been
bad. Mrs. Aston is much as I left her, with-
out any new symptoms; but, between time
and palsy, wearing away. Mrs. Gastrel is
brisk and lively.

Burney told me that she was to go, but
you will have my dear Queeney; tell her that
I do not forget her, and that I hope she re-
members me. Against our meeting we will
both make good resolutions, which on my
side, I hope to keep; but such hopes are very
deceitful. I would not willingly think the
same of all hopes, and particularly should be
loath to suspect of deceit, my hope of being
always, dearest Madam, Your, &c.

*On preference of economy
she was forced to
Bath, after having sent
her paramour to
Milan, that the Guar-
dians might not come
to the knowledge of
her intrigues, and of
her intention to marry
him, which would
have made the
principal and active
Executor shrink from
the executorship. At
Bath she lived most
habituarily, saw no
manner of company,
allowed no masters
to her daughters,
thou she had an
ample allowance
for their maintenance
and education, and
spared all she could,
that she might remit
eight hundred pounds
a year to Lizzetti.
This was the economy
that Johnson approu-
ed. Good man! He
knew no better.*

L E T T E R CCLXVIII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAREST DEAR LADY, Oct. 27, 1781.

YOUR Oxford letter followed me hither, with Lichfield put upon the direction in the place of Oxford, and was received at the same time as the letter written next after it. All is therefore well.

Queeney is a naughty captious girl, that will not write because I did not remember to ask her. Pray tell her that I ask her now, and that I depend upon her for the history of her own time.

*Lucy Porter, his
Wife's daughter.*

Poor Lucy's illness has left her very deaf, and, I think, very inarticulate. I can scarcely make her understand me, and she can hardly make me understand her. So here are merry doings. But she seems to like me better than she did. She eats very little, but does not fall away.

Mrs.

Mrs. Cobb and Peter Garrick are as you left them. Garrick's legatees at this place are very angry that they receive nothing. Things are not quite right, though we are so far from London.

Mrs. Aston is just as I left her. She walks no worse; but I am afraid speaks less distinctly as to her utterance. Her mind is untouched. She eats too little, and wears away. The extenuation is her only bad symptom. She was glad to see me.

That naughty girl Queeney, now she is in my head again, how could she think that I did not wish to hear from her, a dear sweet. — But he must suffer who can love.

All here is gloomy; a faint struggle with the tediousness of time; a doleful confession of present misery, and the approach seen and felt of what is most dreaded and most shunned. But such is the lot of man.

I am, dearest Madam,

Your, &c.

LETTER CCLXIX.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM, Lichfield, Oct. 31, 1781.

IT almost enrages me to be suspected of forgetting the discovery of the papers relating to Cummins's claim. These papers we must grant the liberty of using, because the law will not suffer us to deny them. We may be summoned to declare what we know, and what we know is in those papers. When the evidence appears, * * * will be directed by her lawyers to submit in quiet. I suppose it will be proper to give at first only a transcript.

Your income, diminished as it is, you may, without any painful frugality, make sufficient. I wish your health were as much in your power, and the effects of abstinence were as certain as those of parsimony. Of your regimen I do not think with much approbation; it is only palliative, and crows the disease, but does not eradicate it. I wish you had at the beginning digested full meals in a warm room, and

*she pretended illness
in every letter to him
to conceal her game
better and better: yet
never was she so well
in her life, and full
of luscious thoughts.*

and excited the humour to exhaust its power upon the surface. This, I believe, must be done at last.

Miss Seward has been enquiring after Susan Thrale, of whom she had heard so much from Mrs. Cumyns, as excites her curiosity. If my little dear Perversity continues to be cross, Susy may be my girl too; but I had rather have them both. If Queeney does not write soon, she shall have a very reprehensory letter.

if Queeney had been able to write what she knew, her letter would have distressed him.

I have here but a dull scene. Poor Lucy's health is very much broken. She takes very little of either food or exercise, and her hearing is very dull, and her utterance confused; but she will have *Watts's Improvement of the Mind*. Her mental powers are not impaired, and her social virtues seem to increase. She never was so civil to me before.

Mrs. Aston is not, that I perceive, worse than when I left her; but she eats too little, and is somewhat emaciated. She likewise is glad to see me, and I am glad that I have come.

There is little of the sunshine of life, and my own health does not gladden me. But to scatter the gloom—I went last night to the

ball, where, you know, I can be happy even without you. On the ball, which was very gay, I looked awhile, and went away.

I am, dear Madam,

Your, &c.

LETTER CCLXX.

Mrs. THRALE to Dr. JOHNSON.

DEAR SIR,

Nov. 2.

THERE was no need to be enraged, because I thought you might easily forget a transaction not at all pleasing to remember; nor no need that I should be enraged if you had indeed forgotten it—but you was always suspicious in matters of memory. Cummins don't forget it however, as I can tell you more at large. My health is growing very bad to be sure. I will starve still more rigidly for a while, and watch myself carefully; but more than six months will I not bestow upon that subject; you shall not have in me

a va-

*All this is a lie
to cover her game,
as I have already
observed.*

a valetudinary correspondent, who is always writing such letters, that to read the labels tyed on bottles by an apothecary's boy would be more eligible and amusing; nor will I live like Flavia in Law's Serious Call, who spends half her time and money on herself, with sleeping draughts and waking draughts and cordials and broths. My desire is always to determine against my own gratification, so far as shall be possible for my body to co-operate with my mind, and you will not suspect me of wearing blisters, and living wholly upon vegetables for sport. If that will do, the disorder may be removed; but if health is gone, and gone for ever, we will act as Zachary Pearce the famous bishop of Rochester did, when he lost the wife he loved so—call for one glass to the health of her who is departed, never more to return—and so go quietly back to the usual duties of life, and forbear to mention her again from that time till the last day of it.—Susan is exceedingly honoured, I think, by Miss Seward's enquiries, and I would have Susan think so too; the humbler one's heart is, the more one's pride is gratified, if one may use so apparently Irish an expression, but the meaning of it does not lie deep. They who are too proud

What an abominable lie! she determined against her own gratification? she thought of nothing else but to gratify her lust at the very time, as it appeared soon after.

What a confounded
hypocrite to keep
poor Johnson for
crediting any report
about D. D. in
case any had been
made to him!

Hypocrity upon
hypocrity.

to care whether they please or no, lose much delight themselves, and give none to their neighbours. Mrs. Porter is in a bad way, and that makes you melancholy; the visits to Stowhill will this year be more frequent than ever. I am glad Watts's Improvement of the Mind is a favourite book among the Lichfield ladies: it is so pious, so wise, so easy a book to read for any person, and so useful, nay necessary, are its precepts to us all, that I never cease recommending it to our young ones. 'Tis *a la portée de chacun* so, yet never vulgar; but Law beats him for wit; and the names are never happy in Watts somehow. I fancy there was no comparison between the scholastick learning of the two writers; but there is prodigious knowledge of the human heart, and perfect acquaintance with common life, in the Serious Call. You used to say you would not trust me with that author upstairs on the dressing-room shelf, yet I now half wish I had never followed any precepts but his. Our lasses, indeed, might possibly object to the education given her daughters by Law's Eusebia.

That the ball did so little towards diverting you, I do not wonder: what can a ball do towards diverting any one who has not

other hopes and other designs than barely to see people dance, or even to dance himself? They who are entertained *at* the ball are never much amused *by* the ball I believe, yet I love the dance on Queeney's birth-day and yours, where none but very honest and very praiseworthy passions, if passions they can be called, heighten the mirth and gaiety. It has been thought by many wise folks, that we fritter our pleasures all away by refinement, and when one reads Goldsmith's works, either verse or prose, one fancies that in ^{coarser} ~~corrupt~~ life there is more enjoyment—yet *we* should find little solace from alehouse merriment or cottage carousals, whatever *the best wrestler on the green* might do I suppose; mere brandy and brown sugar *liqueur*, like that which Foote presented the Cherokee kings with, and won their hearts from our fine ladies who treated them with Sponge biscuits and Frontiniac. I am glad Queeney and you are to resolve so stoutly, and labour so violently; such a union may make her wiser and you happier, and can give me nothing but delight.

We read a good deal here in your absence, that is, *I* do: it is better we sate all together than in separate rooms; better that I read

than not : and better that I should never read what is not fit for the young ones to hear : besides, I am sure they *must* hear that which I read *out* to them, and so one saves the trouble of commanding what one knows will never be obeyed,——I can find no other way as well.

Come home, however, for 'tis dull living without you ; Sir Philip and Mr. Selwin call very often, and are exceedingly kind. I see them always with gratitude and pleasure ; but ~~as~~ the first has left us now for a month ; come home therefore. You are not happy away, and I fear I shall never be happy again in this world between one thing and another. My health, flesh, and complexion are quite lost, and I shall have a red face if I live, and that will be mighty detestable—a humpback would be less offensive vastly.

This is the time for fading ; the year is fading round us, and every day shuts in more dismally than the last did. I never passed so melancholy a summer, though I have passed some that were more painful ; privation is indeed supposed to be worse than pain.

Instead of trying the Sortes Virgilianæ for our absent friends, we agreed after dinner to-day to ask little Harriet what they were doing now who used to be our common guests at Streatham. Dr. Johnson (says she) is very rich and wise, Sir Philip is drown'd in the water—and Mr. Piozzi is very sick and lame, *This lesser and all this*
poor man! What a curious way of deciding! *parade of learning,*
all in her little soft voice. Was not there a *and for many other*
custom among the ancients in some country *was written*
——'tis mentioned in Herodotus, if I re- *by her for the sole*
member right——that they took that method *purpose of this*
of enquiring into futurity from the mouths of *edition the other day.*
infants under three years old?—but I will *attribution which may be*
not swear to the book I have read it in. The *the same man made.*
Scriptural expression, however, *Out of the*
mouths of babes and sucklings, &c. is likely
enough to allude to it, if it were once a ge-
neral practice. In Ireland, where the pea-
sants are mad after play, particularly back-
gammon, Mr. Murphy says, they will even,
when deprived of the necessaries for continu-
ing so favourite a game, cut the turf in a clean
spot of green sward, and make it into tables
for that amusement, setting a little baby boy
behind the hedge to call their throws for them,
and supply with his unconscious decisions the
place of box and dice.

Adieu,

Adieu, dear Sir, and be as cheerful as you can this gloomy season. I see nobody happy hereabouts but the Burneys; they love each other with uncommon warmth of family affection, and are beloved by the world as much as if their fondness were less concentrated. The Captain has got a fifty gun ship now, and we are all *so* rejoiced. Once more farewell, and do not forget Streatham nor its inhabitants, who are all much yours—and most so of all,

Your faithful Servant,

H. L. THRALE.

We never name Mr. Newton of Lichfield: I hope neither he nor his fine China begin to break yet——of other friends there the accounts get very bad to be sure.

L E T T E R CCLXXI.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAREST MADAM, Lichfield, Nov. 3, 1781.

YOU very kindly remind me of the dear home which I have left; but I need none of your aids to recollection, for I am here gasping for breath, and yet better than those whom I came to visit. Mrs. Aston has been for three years a paralytic crawler; but, I think, with her mind unimpaired. She seems to me such as I left her; but she now eats little, and is therefore much emaciated. Her sister thinks her, and she thinks herself, passing fast away.

Lucy has had since my last visit a dreadful illness, from which her physicians declared themselves hopeless of recovering her, and which has shaken the general fabric, and weakened the powers of life. She is unable or unwilling to move, and is never likely to have more of either strength or spirit.

I am

I am so visibly disordered, that a medical man, who only saw me at church, sent me some pills. To those whom I love here I can give no help, and from those that love me none can I receive. Do you think that I need to be reminded of home and you?

The time of the year is not very favourable to excursions. I thought myself above assistance or obstruction from the seasons; but find the autumnal blast sharp and nipping, and the fading world an uncomfortable prospect. Yet I may say with Milton, that I do not *abate much of heart or hope*. To what I have done I do not despair of adding something, but *what it shall be I know not*.

I am, Madam,

most affectionately yours.

L E T T E R CCLXXII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM, Ashbourne, Nov. 10, 1781.

YESTERDAY I came to Ashbourne, and last night I had very little rest. Dr. Taylor lives on milk, and grows every day better, and is not wholly without hope. Every body enquires after you and Queeney; but whatever Burney may think of the celerity of fame, the name of Evelina had never been heard at Lichfield till I brought it. I am afraid my dear townsmen will be mentioned in future days as the last part of this nation that was civilised. But the days of darkness are soon to be at an end; the reading society ordered it to be procured this week.

Since I came into this quarter of the earth I have had a very sorry time, and I hope to be better when I come back. The little paddock and plantations here are very bleak. The Bishop of Chester is here now with his father-

222 LETTERS TO AND FROM

father-in-law : he sent us a message last night, and I intend to visit him.

Most of your Ashbourne friends are well. Mr. Kennedy's daughter has married a shoemaker, and he lives with them, and has left his parsonage.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R CCLXXIII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM, Ashbourne, Nov. 12, 1781.

I HAVE a mind to look on Queeney as my own dear girl ; and if I set her a bad example, I ought to counteract it by good precepts ; and he that knows the consequences of any fault is best qualified to tell them. I have through my whole progress of authorship honestly endeavoured to teach the right, though I have not been sufficiently diligent to practise it, and have offered mankind my opinion as a rule, but never professed my behaviour as an example.

I shall

I shall be very sorry to lose Mr. ——— ; but why should he so certainly die? * * * needed not have died if he had tried to live. If Mr. ——— will drink a great deal of water, the acrimony that corrodes his bowels will be diluted, if the cause be only acrimony ; but I suspect dysenteries to be produced by animalcula, which I know not how to kill.

If the medical man did me good, it was by his benevolence ; by his pills I never mended. I am, however, rather better than I was.

Dear Mrs. ———, she has the courage becoming an admiral's lady, but courage is no virtue in her cause.

I have been at Lichfield persecuted with solicitations to read a poem ; but I sent the authour word, that I would never review the work of an anonymous authour ; for why should I put my name in the power of one who will not trust me with his own. With this answer Lucy was satisfied, and I think it may satisfy all whom it may concern.

If C——y did nothing for life but add weight to its burden, and darkness to its gloom,

gloom, he is kindest to those from whom he is furthest. I hope, when I come, not to advance perhaps your pleasures, though even of that I shall be unwilling to despair; but at least not to increase your inconveniencies, which would be a very unfuitable return for all the kindness that you have shewn to,

Madam,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R CCLXXIV.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAREST MADAM,

Ashbourne, Nov. 14, 1781.

HERE is Doctor Taylor, by a resolute adherence to bread and milk, with a better appearance of health than he has had for a long time past; and here am I, living very temperately, but with very little amendment. But the balance is not perhaps very unequal: he has no pleasure like that which I receive from the kind importunity with which you invite me to return. There is no danger of very long delay. There is nothing
in

in this part of the world that can counteract your attraction.

The hurt in my leg has grown well slowly, according to Hector's prognostick, and seems now to be almost healed: but my nights are very restless, and the days are therefore heavy, and I have not your conversation to cheer them.

I am willing however to hear that there is happiness in the world, and delight to think on the pleasure diffused among the Burneys. I question if any ship upon the ocean goes out attended with more good wishes than that which carries the fate of Burney. I love all of that breed whom I can be said to know, and one or two whom I hardly know I love upon credit, and love them because they love each other. Of this consanguineous unanimity I have had never much experience; but it appears to me one of the great lenitives of life; but it has this deficiency, that it is never found when distress is mutual—He that has less than enough for himself has nothing to spare, and as every man feels only his own necessities, he is apt to think those of others less pressing, and to accuse them of withhold-

ing what in truth they cannot give. He that has his foot firm upon dry ground may pluck another out of the water; but of those that are all afloat, none has any care but for himself.

We do not hear that the deanery is yet given away, and, though nothing is said, I believe much is still thought about it. *Hope travels through*—

I am, dearest of all dear ladies,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R CCLXXV.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM, Ashbourne, Nov. 24, 1781.

I SHALL leave this place about the beginning of next week, and shall leave every place as fast as I decently can, till I get back to you, whose kindness is one of my great comforts. I am not well, but have a mind every

now and then to think myself better, and I now hope to be better under your care.

It was time to send Kam to another master; but I am glad that before he went he beat Hector, for he has really the appearance of a superior species to an animal whose whole power is in his legs, and that against the most defenceless of all the inhabitants of the earth.

Dr. Taylor really grows well, and directs his compliments to be sent. I hope Mr. Perkins will be well too.

But why do you tell me nothing of your own health? Perhaps since the fatal pinch of snuff I may have no care about it. I am glad that you have returned to your meat, for I never expected that abstinence would do you good.

Piozzi, I find, is coming in spite of Miss Harriet's prediction, or second sight, and when he comes and I come, you will have two about you that love you; and I question if either of us heartily care how few more you have. But how many soever they may be, I hope you keep your kindness for me, and I have a great mind to have Queeney's kindness too.

Impudent Bitch! How could she venture upon forging this paragraph! Johnson to put himself a-breast with such an ignorant and stupid dog as Piozzi! you lie, you Bitch, and Johnson never wrote this damned paragraph.

Frank's wife has brought him a wench ; but I cannot yet get intelligence of her colour, and therefore have never told him how much depends upon it.

The weather here is chill, and the air damp. I have been only once at the waterfall, which I found doing as it used to do, and came away. I had not you nor Queeney with me.

Your, &c.

LETTER CCLXXVI.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

Lichfield, Dec. 3, 1781.

I AM now come back to Lichfield, where I do not intend to stay long enough to receive another letter. I have little to do here but to take leave of Mrs. Aston, I hope not the last leave. But Christians may with more confidence than Sophonisba

Avremo tosto lungo lungo spazio
Per stare assieme, et sarà forse eterno.

My

My time past heavily at Ashbourne, yet I could not easily get away, though Taylor, I sincerely think, was glad to see me go. I have now learned the inconveniences of a winter campaign; but I hope home will make amends for all my foolish sufferings.

I do not like poor Burney's vicarious captainship. Surely the tale of Tantalus was made for him. Surely he will be in time a captain like another captain, of a ship like another ship.

You have got Piozzi again, notwithstanding pretty Harriet's dire denunciations. The Italian translation which he has brought, you will find no great accession to your library, for the writer seems to understand very little English. When we meet we can compare some passages. Pray contrive a multitude of good things for us to do when we meet. Something that may *hold all together*; though if any thing makes *me* love you more, it is going from you.

The Birch makes Johnson write again the name of Piozzi, and I am positive she cannot show that to have ever been the case.

I am, &c.

LETTER CCLXXVII,

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM, Birmingham, Dec. 8, 1781.

I AM come to this place on my way to London and to Streatham. I hope to be in London on Tuesday or Wednesday, and at Streatham on Thursday, by your kind conveyance. I shall have nothing to relate either wonderful or delightful. But remember that you sent me away, and turned me out into the world, and you must take the chance of finding me better or worse. This you may know at present, that my affection for you is not diminished, and my expectation from you is encreased. Do not neglect me, nor relinquish me. Nobody will ever love you better or honour you more than,

Madam,

Your, &c.

LETTER CCLXXVIII.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAREST LADY,

Feb. 16, 1782.

I AM better, but not yet well; but hope springs eternal.—As soon as I can think myself not troublesome, you may be sure of seeing me, for such a place to visit nobody ever had. Dearest Madam, do not think me worse than I am; be sure at least, that whatever happens to me, I am with all the regard that admiration of excellence and gratitude for kindness can excite,

Madam,

Your, &c.

If he had known what was going on at the time, he would not have much admired her excellence.

L E T T E R CCLXXIX,

Mrs. THRALE to Dr. JOHNSON.

DEAR SIR,

Feb. 16, 1782.

*I suppose she speaks
of the ready furnished
house she took in
Argyle-buildings,
to have Piovoli
more at hand.*

I CAN find no paper readily but what is ruled for children's use—'tis all one I suppose, so do excuse it. My house is pretty enough, but wond'rous cold, though the season has hitherto been uncommonly mild, which perhaps may affect some people's health. 'You are used to scorn little things, but must now be contented to acknowledge their influence.—The influence of little people I hope you will never be magnificent enough to despise. Was it not Godeau who was called among the French wits *Le Nain de Julie*? And who wrote so prettily after his great preferment to an old friend in these words? *Au reste, mon ami, n'oubliez jamais le Nain de Julie, qui voudroit bien estre un Geant pour vous servir.* So say I.

Looking over some French melanges yesterday, I observed that Mr. L'Abbé D'Artigny
uses

uses the word *accointance*; it was a new thing to me, and one of which I had no notion before: Pray how came it into our language?

You are now making haste to be well I hope, and intend to be brisk, and answer questions willingly and kindly. I told Doctor Lawrence, that the *Gravedo* of which you complain should be kept from *increasing long in this case*, and as he is as good a grammarian as he is a physician, I hope he will take the hint. Dear Sir, be well, or how shall we be merry,

With talk of spectacles and pills,
as Swift says.

The newspapers would spoil my few com-
forts that are left if they could; but you
tell me that's only because I have the reputa-
tion, whether true or false, of being a wit
forsooth: and you remember poor Floretta
who was teized into wishing away her spirit,
her beauty, her fortune, and at last even
her life, never could bear the bitter water
which was to have washed away her wit;
which she resolved to keep with all its conse-
quences.

The newspapers
began then to give
hints of her passion
for Fiorri, which
soon forced her to
go to Bath, and send
him to Milan. I
suspect that her own
servants gave those
hints in the daily
papers, as they were
all shocked at her
frequent fornications.
She suspected me
of such manoeuvres,
but she was quite
wrong. I would have
been greatly more
prigant, had I put
my hand to paper.
But I cared not a
dam for her, and
never wrote just my
hand to paper about
so dirty a subject.

I am told the new plays this year *are got up* (as the phrase is) very penuriously: our Italian friends tell a comical story, applicable enough, of what happened in their own country: I dare say you have heard it from Saftres. How to ridicule the manager's parsimony, some one said, *Non sapete forse fare una commedia senza spese verune? No Signor, facciamo pur quella d'Adamo e d'Eva, così saranno risparmiati gli abiti. Ma lo scandalo!* says the other. *Oibo! la faremo all'oscuro, e così risparmierete anche i lumi.*

Is this nonsense enough for one morning? I cannot bear the thoughts of turning the page to write more such. Accept the best compliments of all belonging to

Your most faithful servant,

H. L. THRALE.

LETTER CCLXXX.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

Feb. 17, 1782.

SURE such letters would make any man well. I will let them have their full operation upon me; but while I write I am not without a cough. I can however keep it quiet by diacodium, and am in hope that with all other disturbances it will go away, and permit me to enjoy the happiness of being,

Madam, Your, &c.

LETTER CCLXXXI.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAREST MADAM, Bolt-court, Feb. 21, 1782.

I CERTAINLY grow better. I lay this morning with such success, that I called before I rose for dry linen. I believe I have had a crisis.

Last

Last night called Sir Richard Jebb; and many people call or send: I am not neglected nor forgotten. But let me be always sure of your kindness. I hope to try again this week whether your house is yet so cold, for to be away from you, if I did not think our separation likely to be short, how could I endure? You are a dear dear lady, and your kind attention is a great part of what life affords to,

Madam,

Your, &c.

LETTER CCLXXXII.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAREST OF ALL DEAR LADIES, March 14, 1782.

I wish she had given us the Letter, that gave motive to this answer.

THAT Povilleri should write these verses is impossible. I am angry at Saffres.

Seven ounces! Why I sent a letter to Dr. Lawrence, who is ten times more *timor-some* than is your Jebb, and he came and stood by while one vein was opened with too small

DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON. 237

an orifice, and bled eight ounces and stopped. Then another vein was opened, which ran eight more. And here am I sixteen ounces lighter, for I have had no dinner.

I think the loss of blood has done no harm; whether it has done good, time will tell. I am glad that I do not sink without resistance.

I am, Dear Madam,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R CCLXXXIII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

M A D A M,

April.

I HAVE been very much out of order since you sent me away; but why should I tell you, who do not care, nor desire to know? I dined with Mr. Paradise on Monday, with the Bishop of St. Asaph yesterday, with the Bishop of Chester I dine to-day, and with the Academy on Saturday, with Mr. Hoole on Monday, and with Mrs. Garrick on Thursday

238 LETTERS TO AND FROM

day the 2d of May, and then—what care you?
what then?

The news run, that we have taken seven-
teen French transports—that Langton's lady
is lying down with her eighth child, all alive
—and Mrs. Carter's Miss Sharpe is going
to marry a schoolmaster sixty-two years old.

*These words again
are of her own
fabrication. What
an impudent wretch!*

Do not let Mr. Piozzi, nor any body else
put me quite out of your head, and do not
think that any body will love you like

Your, &c.

L E T T E R CCLXXXIV.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAREST MADAM,

April 30, 1782.

I HAVE had a fresh cold and been very
poorly. But I was yesterday at Mr.
Hoole's, where were Miss Reynolds and
many others. I am going to the club.

Since Mrs. Garrick's invitation I have a
letter from Miss Moore, to engage me for the
evening.

evening. I have an appointment to Miss Monkton, and another with Lady Sheffield at Mrs. Way's.

Two days ago Mr. Cumberland had his third night, which, after all expences, put into his own pocket five pounds. He has lost his plume.

Mrs. S—— refused to sing, at the Duchess of Devonshire's request, a song to the Prince of Wales. They pay for the —— neither principal nor interest; and poor Garrick's funeral expences are yet unpaid, though the undertaker is broken. Could you have a better purveyor for a little scandal? But I wish I was at Streatham. I beg Miss to come early, and I may perhaps reward you with more mischief.

I am, dearest and dearest Lady,

Your, &c.

LETTER CCLXXXV.

TO MRS. T H R A L E.

MADAM,

May 8, 1782.

YESTERDAY I was all so bonny, as who but me? At night my cough drove me to diacodium, and this morning I suspect that diacodium will drive me to sleep in the chair. Breath however is better, and I shall try to escape the other bleeding, for I am of the chymical sect, which holds phlebotomy in abhorrence.

But it is not plenty nor diminution of blood that can make me more or less,

My dearest dear Lady,

Your, &c.

I send my compliments to my dear Queeney.

L E T T E R CCLXXXVI.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

MADAM,

London, June 4, 1782.

W I S E L Y was it said by him who said it first, that this world is all ups and downs. You know, dearest Lady, that when I prest your hand at parting I was rather down. When I came hither, I ate my dinner well, but was so harassed by the cough, that Mr. Strahan said, it was an extremity which he could not have believed without the sensible and true avouch of his own observation. I was indeed almost sinking under it, when Mrs. Williams happened to cry out that such a cough should be stilled by opium or any means. I took yesterday half an ounce of bark, and knew not whether opium would counteract it, but remembering no prohibition in the medical books, and knowing that to quiet the cough with opium was one of Lawrence's last orders, I took two grains, which gave me not sleep indeed, but rest, and that rest has given me strength and courage.

VOL. II.

R

This

This morning to my bed-side came dear Sir Richard. I told him of the opium, and he approved it, and told me, if I went to Oxford, which he rather advised, that I should strengthen the constitution by the bark, tame the cough with opium, keep the body open, and support myself by liberal nutriment.

As to the journey I know not that it will be necessary, *desine mollium tandem querularum*. — This day I dined upon skate, pudding, goose, and your asparagus, and could have eaten more, but was prudent.

Pray for me, dear Madam; I hope the tide has turned. The change that I feel is more than I durst have hoped, or than I thought possible; but there has yet not passed a whole day, and I may rejoice perhaps too soon. Come and see me, and when you think best, upon due consideration, take me away.

I am, dear Madam,

Your, &c.

LETTER CCLXXXVII.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM, Oxford, June 12, 1782.

MY letter was perhaps peevish, but it was not unkind. I should have cared little about a wanton expression, if there had been no kindness.

*that peevish letter
does not appear,
and she must know
the reason why she
has sent it.*

I find no particular salubrity in this air, my respiration is very laborious; my appetite is good, and my sleep commonly long and quiet; but a very little motion disables me.

I dine to-day with Dr. Adams, and to-morrow with Dr. Wetherel. Yesterday Dr. Edwards invited some men from Exeter college, whom I liked very well. These variations of company help the mind, though they cannot do much for the body. But the body receives some help from a cheerful mind.

Keep up some kindness for me; when I am with you again, I hope to be less burdensome, by being less sick.

I am, dearest Lady,
Your, &c.

R 2

LETTER CCLXXXVIII.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

Oxford, June 13, 1782.

YESTERDAY a little physick drove away a great part of my cough, but I am still very much obstructed in my respiration, and so soon tired with walking, that I have hardly ventured one unnecessary step. Of my long illness much more than this does not remain, but this is very burthensome. I sleep pretty well, and have appetite enough, but I cheat it with fish.

Yesterday I dined at Dr. Adams's with Miss More, and other personages of eminence. To-day I am going to Dr. Wetherel; and thus day goes after day, not wholly without amusement.

I think not to stay here long. Till I am better it is not prudent to sit long in the libraries, for the weather is yet so cold, that in the penury of fuel, for which we think ourselves

DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON. 245

ourselves very unhappy, I have yet met with none so frugal as to sit without fire.

I am, Madam,

Your, &c.

Poor Davis complained that he had not received his money for Boyle.

L E T T E R CCLXXXIX.

Mrs. THRALE to DR. JOHNSON.

DEAR SIR,

Streatham, June 14.

I AM glad you confess yourself peevish, for confession must precede amendment. Do not study to be more unhappy than you are, and if you can eat and sleep well, do not be frightened, for there can be no real danger. Are you acquainted with Dr. Lee, the master of Baliol College? And are you not delighted with his gayety of manners and youthful vivacity now that he is eighty-six years old? I never heard a more perfect or excellent pun than his, when some one told him how in a

R 3

late

late dispute among the Privy Counsellors, the Lord Chancellor struck the table with such violence that he split it: No, no, no, replied the Master dryly, I can hardly persuade myself that *he split the Table*, though I believe *he divided the Board*. Will you send me any thing better from Oxford than this? for there must be no more fastidiousness now; no more refusing to laugh at a good quibble, when you so loudly profess the want of amusement and the necessity of diversion. How the people of this age do cry for rattles is indeed little to its credit, for knowledge is diffused most certainly, if not increased, and that ought to stand instead of perpetual variety one would think. Apropos to general improvement: I was reading the Spectator to Sophy while my maid papered my curls yester-morning, it was the 3d vol. 217, where the man complains of an indelicate mistress, who said on some occasion that her stomach ach'd, and lamented how her teeth had got a feed stuck between them.—The woman that dressed me was so astonished at this grossness, though common enough in Addison's time one sees, that she cried out, Well Madam! surely that could never have been *a lady* who used expressions like those.

I much

I much wonder whether this refinement has spread all over the Continent, or whether 'tis confined to our own island: when we were in France we could form little judgment, as our time was passed chiefly among English; yet I recollect that one fine lady, who entertained us very splendidly, put her mouth to the teapot, and blew in the spout when it did not pour freely. My maid Peggy would not have touched the tea after such an operation. Was it convenient, and agreeable, and wise, and fine, I should like to see the world *beyond sea* very much;

But fate has fast bound her
With Styx nine times round her.

So your friend must look on the waves at Brighthelmstone without breathing a wish to cross them.

Mean time let us be as *merry* as reading Burton upon *Melancholy* will make us. You bid me study that book in your absence, and now, What have I found? Why, I have found, or fancied, that he has been cruelly plundered: that Milton's first idea of *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso* were suggested by the verses at the beginning; that Savage's Speech of Suicide in the *Wanderer*, grew up out of a passage

R 4

you

you probably remember towards the 216th page; that Swift's Tale of the Woman that holds water in her mouth, to regain her husband's love by silence, had its source in the same farrago; and that there is an odd similitude between my Lord's trick upon Sly the Tinker, in Shakespear's Taming of the Shrew, and some stuff I have been reading in Burton.

And now, Dear Sir, be as comfortable as you can, and do not dun me for that kindness which has never been withheld, only because it is cold weather and you want employment; but be gentle and tranquil like Dr. Adams, or gay and flashy like Dr. Lee, and then——what then? Why then you will deserve Miss Adams's good will, and Miss More's esteem, added to the humble service and attentive regard of your ever equally

Faithful, &c.

H. L. THRALE.

Sir Richard asks after you with very tender care indeed: what would you have of us all that you cannot command? He is among those who would do any thing in the world to oblige you.

LETTER CCXC.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

Oxford, June 17, 1782.

I HAVE found no sudden alteration or amendment, but I am grown better by degrees. My cough is not now very troublesome to myself, nor I hope to others. My breath is still short and encumbered; I do not sleep well, but I lie easy. By change of place, succession of company, and necessity of talking, much of the terrour that had seized me seems to be dispelled.

Oxford has done, I think, what for the present it can do, and I am going flyly to take a place in the coach for Wednesday, and you or my sweet Queeney will fetch me on Thursday, and see what you can make of me,

To-day I am going to dine with Dr. Wheeler, and to-morrow Dr. Edwards has invited Miss Adams and Miss More. Yesterday

day I went with Dr. Edwards to his living. He has really done all that he could do for my relief or entertainment, and really drives me away by doing too much.

I am, Madam,

Your, &c.

When I come back to retirement, it will be great charity in you to let me come back to something else.

LETTER CCXCI.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAREST LADY,

June 28, 1781.

I WAS blooded on Saturday; I think, not copiously enough, but the Doctor would permit no more. I have however his consent to bleed again to-day. Since I left you I have eaten very little, on Friday chiefly broath, on Saturday nothing but some bread in the morning, on Sunday nothing but some bread and three roasted apples. I try to get well and wish to see you; but if I came, I should only

DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON. 251

only cough and cough. Mr. Steevens, who is with me, says that my hearing is returned. We are here all three sick, and poor Levet is gone.

Do not add to my other distresses any
diminution of kindness for,

Madam,

Your, &c.

This recommending himself so often to her kindness, makes one think that he began to find out her indifference with regard to him.

L E T T E R CCXCII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

Saturday, July 8, 1782.

PERHAPS some of your people may call tomorrow. I have this day taken a passage to Oxford for Monday. Not to frisk as you express it with very unfeeling irony, but to catch at the hopes of better health. The change of place may do something. To leave the house where so much has been suffered affords some pleasure. When I write to you
write

*he doubted for
sure.*

write to me again, and let me have the pleasure of knowing that I am still considered
as

Madam,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R CCXCIII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR LADY,

Dec. 20, 1782.

I HOPE the worst is at last over. I had a very good night, and slept very long. You can hardly think how bad I have been while you were in all your altitudes, at the Opera, and all the fine places, and thinking little of me. Saffres has been very good. Queeney never sent me a kind word. I hope however to be with you again in a short time, and shew you a man again.

I am, Madam,

Your, &c.

LETTER CCXCIV.

Mrs. THRALE to Dr. JOHNSON.

MY health, my children, and my fortune, Dear Sir, are coming fast to an end I think—not so my sorrows: Harriet is dead, and Cicely is dying: I had taken an emetic when the express came, and have ordered a post-chaise and chamomile tea at this instant. A letter from London bids me make haste thither, and not sit *philosophically* at Bath. This is from one of the guardians. I am more ill now than I can express, of which Dr. Woodward is witness; who says, if I *do* go, and add the hooping-cough to that which already has worn me to a skeleton, it will be my last trouble in this world. So much the better; I am as tired of life as can be, but will talk with dear Dr. Pepys once more before I leave it. If he cannot save Cecilia, nobody can I am sure; Sir Richard is with her twice a-day besides: when I am there I will not touch her, nor tempt death so madly, though weary of living.

Was

What epistle does she mean? This is a proof, that this collection is not complete, and that she has found several of Johnson's letters for some good reason of her own.

Was it not Torquato Tasso who was asked once what use he made of his *philosophy*? and did he not reply thus? *I have learned from it to endure your malice?* It ought to have been my answer to the epistle of to-day.

Adieu, Dear Sir, I *must* lie down a moment, then get into the chaise, and drive all night till I reach Ray and Fry's school: no need to see hateful London, is there? I will avoid it, if possible, to be sure.

This is Good Friday night, and no Christian ought to complain of hard sufferings on this anniversary of harder sufferings inflicted on his Saviour himself. I will therefore cease repining, and do my duty cheerfully.

My dear Sir, a sudden illness prevents my ability to get into the chaise, so I'll send this letter by the coach. If I have any life left I will use it to go see Cecilia to-morrow. I am then and always equally your obliged and faithful servant,

H. L. THRALE.

You will not know me when I *do* come.

Sharp misery has worne me to the bone.

LETTER CCXCV.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM, London, May-day, 1783.

I AM glad that you went to Streatham, though you could not save the dear pretty little girl. I loved her, for she was Thrale's and your's, and by her dear father's appointment in some sort mine: I love you all, and therefore cannot without regret see the phalanx broken, and reflect that you and my other dear girls are deprived of one that was born your friend. To such friends, every one that has them, has recourse at last, when it is discovered, and discovered it seldom fails to be, that the fortuitous friendships of inclination or vanity are at the mercy of a thousand accidents. But we must still our disquiet with remembering that, where there is no guilt, all is for the best. I am glad to hear that Cecily is so near recovery.

For some days after your departure I was pretty well, but I have begun to languish again, and last night was very tedious and
op-

oppressive. I excused myself to-day from dining with General Paoli, where I love to dine, but I was griped by the talons of necessity.

On Saturday I dined, as is usual, at the opening of the Exhibition. Our company was splendid, whether more numerous than at any former time I know not. Our tables seem always full. On Monday, if I am told truth, were received at the door one hundred and ninety pounds, for the admision of three thousand eight hundred spectators. Supposing the shew open ten hours, and the spectators staying one with another each an hour, the rooms never had fewer than three hundred and eighty jostling against each other. Poor Lowe met some discouragement, but I interposed for him, and prevailed.

Mr. Barry's exhibition was opened the same day, and a book is published to recommend it, which, if you read it, you will find decorated with some satirical pictures of Sir Joshua Reynolds and others. I have not escaped. You must however think with some esteem of Barry for the comprehension of his design.

I am, Madam, Your &c.

L E T T E R CCXCVI.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

London, May 8, 1783.

I THOUGHT your letter long in coming. I suppose it is true that I looked but languid at the exhibition, but have been worse since. Last Wednesday, the Wednesday of last week, I came home ill from Mr. Jodrel's, and after a tedious, oppressive, impatient night, sent an excuse to General Paoli, and took on Thursday two brisk catharticks and a dose of calomel. Little things do me no good. At night I was much better. Next day cathartick again, and the third day opium for my cough. I lived without flesh all the three days. The recovery was more than I expected. I went to church on Sunday quite at ease.

The exhibition prospers so much, that Sir Joshua says it will maintain the academy. He estimates the probable amount at three thousand pounds. Steevens is of opinion that

Croft's books will sell for near three times as much as they cost, which however is not more than might be expected.

Favour me with a direction to Musgrave of Ireland; I have a charitable office to propose to him. Is he Knight or Baronet?

My present circle of enjoyment is as narrow for me as the Circus for Mrs. Montague. When I first settled in this neighbourhood I had Richardson and Lawrence, and Mrs. Allen at hand. I had Mrs. Williams, then no bad companion, and Levet for a long time always to be had. If I now go out I must go far for company, and at last come back to two sick and discontented women, who can hardly talk, if they had any thing to say, and whose hatred of each other makes one great exercise of their faculties.

But, with all these evils, positive and privative, my health in its present humour promises to mend, and I, in my present humour, promise to take care of it, and if we both keep our words, we may yet have a brush at the cobwebs in the sky.

Let my dear loves write to me, and do you write often yourself to,

Dear Madam, Your, &c.

LETTER CCXCVII.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM, London, June 5, 1783.

WHY do you write so seldom? I was very glad of your letter. You were used formerly to write more, when I know not why you should had much more to say. Do not please yourself with showing me that you can forget me, who do not forget you.

Mr. Desmoulin's account of my health rather wants confirmation. But complaints are useless.

I have, by the migration of one of my ladies, more peace at home; but I remember an old savage chief that says of the Romans with great indignation—*ubi solitudinem faciunt, pacem appellant.*

Mr. ——— was not calamity, it was his sister, to whom I am afraid the term is now strictly applicable, for she seems to have fallen

some way into obscurity; I am afraid by a palsy.

Whence your pity arises for the thief that has made the hangman idle, I cannot discover. I am sorry indeed for every suicide, but I suppose he would have gone to the gallows without being lamented.

You will soon see that Miss H——, if she finds countenance, and gets scholars, will conquer her vexations. Is not Susy likewise one of her pupils? I owe Susy a letter, which I purpose to pay next time.

I can tell you of no new thing in town, but Dr. Maxwel, whose lady is by ill health detained with two little babies at Bath.

You give a cheerful account of your way of life. I hope you will settle into tranquillity.

When I can repay you such a narrative of my felicity, you shall see description.

I am, &c.

LETTER CCXCVIII.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM, Oxford, June 11, 1783.

YESTERDAY I came to Oxford without fatigue or inconvenience. I read in the coach before dinner. I dined moderately, and slept well; but find my breath not free this morning.

Dr. Edwards, to whom I wrote word of my purpose to come, has defeated his own kindness by its excess. He has gone out of his own rooms for my reception, and therefore I cannot decently stay long, unless I can change my abode, which it will not be very easy to do: nor do I know what attractions I shall find here. Here is Miss Moore at Dr. Adams's, with whom I shall dine to-morrow. Of my adventures and observations I shall inform you, and beg you to write to me at Mr. Parker's bookseller.

S 3

I hope

I hope Queeney has got rid of her influenza, and that you escape it. If I had Queeney here, how would I shew her all the places. I hope, however, I shall not want company in my stay here.

I am, Dear Madam,

Your, &c.

LETTER CCXCIX.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

London, June 13, 1783.

YESTERDAY were brought hither two parcels directed to *Mrs. Thrale*, to the care of *Dr. Johnson*. By what the touch can discover, they contain something of which cloaths are made; and I suspect them to be Musgrave's long-expected present. You will order them to be called for, or let me know whither I shall send them.

Crutchley has had the gout, but is abroad again, Seward called on me yesterday. He is going only for a few weeks; first to Paris, and then to Flanders,

Flanders, to contemplate the pictures of Claude Lorraine; and he asked me if that was not as good a way as any of spending time—that time which returns no more—of which however a great part seems to be very foolishly spent, even by the wisest and the best.

That time at least is not lost in which the evils of life are relieved, and therefore the moments which you bestow on Miss H—— are properly employed. She seems to make an uncommon impression upon you. What has she done or suffered out of the common course of things? I love a little secret history.

Poor Dr. Lawrence and his youngest son died almost on the same day.

Mrs. Dobson, the directress of rational conversation, did not translate Petrarch, but epitomised a very bulky French Life of Petrarch. She translated, I think, the Memoirs of D'Aubigné.

Your last letter was very pleasing; it expressed kindness to me, and some degree of placid acquiescence in your present mode of life, which is, I think, the best which is at present within your reach.

S 4

My

My powers and attention have for a long time been almost wholly employed upon my health, I hope not wholly without success, but solitude is very tedious.

I am, Madam,

Your, &c.

LETTER CCC.

Mrs. THRALE to Dr. JOHNSON.

Bath, June 15, 1783.

I BELIEVE it is too true, my dear Sir, that you think on little except yourself and your own health, but then they are subjects on which every one else would think too—and that is a great consolation.

I am willing enough to employ all my thoughts upon *myself*, but there is nobody here who wishes to think with or about me, so I am very sick and a little fullen, and disposed now and then to say like king David, *My lovers and my friends have been put away from*

from me, and my acquaintance bid out of my sight. If the last letter I wrote shewed some degree of placid acquiescence in a situation, which, however displeasing, is the best I can get at just now ;—I pray God to keep me in that disposition, and to lay no more calamity upon me which may again tempt me to murmur and complain. In the mean time assure yourself of my undiminished kindness and veneration : they have been long out of accident's power either to lessen or increase.

So Mr. Seward is going abroad again. I see no harm in his resolution, though the manner of expressing it was likely enough to offend you : yet he is not a man whom any one can justly reproach with negligence of duty ; he does more good than almost any person of twice his fortune, and while he is looking at the works of Claude Lorraine he will certainly be doing no mischief.

The professors of *Ennui* are a very dangerous race of mortals ; for, preferring any occupation to none, they are liable to make many people unhappy by their officious assiduities, while to themselves they stand perfectly exculpated by the remark that *a man must do something—or be killed with Ennui* : how fortunate

fortunate for society when like Seward they seek only to give away their money all winter to persons who want it, and go to Flanders in summer to look at the Claude Loraines.

What Miss H—— had suffered before our acquaintance began I know not. She now endures much from real, and more from fancied illness. Her talents are uncommon for work, and she is a proof that work will not suffice to keep the imagination quiet. She feels like Pekuah, that *the mind will easily straggle from the fingers*, and that *misery of heart cannot be much solaced by silken flowers*.

Poor Dr. Lawrence and his son are dead then: I am very sorry; he was among the few parents I have known who preferred the virtue and happiness of their children to the delight of seeing them grow rich and splendid; and you once told me, that one of his sons (I never heard which) was early bent on obtaining that opulence which is as seldom sought for by youth——Is it that boy who is now dead?

That *you* should be solitary is a sad thing, and a strange one too, when every body is willing to drop in, and for a quarter of an hour at least, save you from a *tête à tête* with

with yourself: I never could catch a moment when you were alone whilst we were in London, and Miss Thrale says the same thing. It would have been a fine advantage indeed could she have seen Oxford now in your company; when we enjoyed it, she was too young to profit of the circumstance. 'Tis so throughout the world I believe: nothing happens of good to us while we can fully use it: every little felicity which does come, comes at a time when waiting for it has spoiled our appetite——

When youth and genial years are flown,
And all the life of life is gone.

Could I however flatter myself with the hopes of a fine clear evening after my various day, I would bear the afternoon storms better than I do——and who knows that it is yet impossible?

Farewel, dear Sir: had I health and spirits as I used to have, I would write as I used to do; but I had then a husband and sons, and for a long time after I knew you, a mother such as no one ever had but me, and such as I sincerely wish my daughters were likely to have in your truly faithful servant,

H. L. THRALE.

Pozzi was then at Milan, but she was sure of his coming back in a few months to make her evening clear.

LETTER CCCI.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

Bolt-court, Fleet-street, June 19, 1783.

DEAR MADAM,

I AM sitting down in no cheerful solitude to write a narrative which would once have affected you with tenderness and sorrow, but which you will perhaps pass over now with the careless glance of frigid indifference. For this diminution of regard however, I know not whether I ought to blame you, who may have reasons which I cannot know, and I do not blame myself, who have for a great part of human life done you what good I could, and have never done you evil.

*He groped and groped,
but never could he
think, that Biondi
was at the bottom
of all this, and made
her sick of all her
old friends.*

I had been disordered in the usual way, and had been relieved by the usual methods, by opium and catharticks, but had rather lessened my dose of opium.

On Monday the 16th I sat for my picture, and walked a considerable way with little inconvenience.

convenience. In the afternoon and evening I felt myself light and easy, and began to plan schemes of life. Thus I went to bed, and in a short time waked and sat up, as has been long my custom, when I felt a confusion and indistinctness in my head, which lasted I suppose about half a minute; I was alarmed, and prayed God, that however he might afflict my body, he would spare my understanding. This prayer, that I might try the integrity of my faculties, I made in Latin verse. The lines were not very good, but I knew them not to be very good: I made them easily, and concluded myself to be unimpaired in my faculties.

*Can this be said
of any other man,
but Johnson? a
truly admirable
fellow he was.*

Soon after I perceived that I had suffered a paralytick stroke, and that my speech was taken from me. I had no pain, and so little dejection in this dreadful state, that I wondered at my own apathy, and considered that perhaps death itself when it should come would excite less horror than seems now to attend it.

In order to rouse the vocal organs I took two drams. Wine has been celebrated for the production of eloquence. I put myself
into

into violent motion, and I think repeated it ; but all was vain. I then went to bed, and, strange as it may seem, I think, slept. When I saw light, it was time to contrive what I should do. Though God stopped my speech he left me my hand, I enjoyed a mercy which was not granted to my dear friend Lawrence, who now perhaps overlooks me as I am writing, and rejoices that I have what he wanted. My first note was necessarily to my servant, who came in talking, and could not immediately comprehend why he should read what I put into his hands.

I then wrote a card to Mr. Allen, that I might have a discreet friend at hand to act as occasion should require. In penning this note I had some difficulty, my hand, I knew not how nor why, made wrong letters. I then wrote to Dr. Taylor to come to me, and bring Dr. Heberden, and I sent to Dr. Brocklesby, who is my neighbour. My physicians are very friendly and very disinterested, and give me great hopes, but you may imagine my situation. I have so far recovered my vocal powers, as to repeat the Lord's Prayer with no very imperfect articulation. My memory, I hope, yet remains as it was ; but

DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON. 271

such an attack produces solicitude for the safety of every faculty.

How this will be received by you I know not. I hope you will sympathise with me; but perhaps

My mistress gracious, mild, and good,
Cries! Is he dumb? 'Tis time he shou'd.

But can this be possible? I hope it cannot. I hope that what, when I could speak, I spoke of you, and to you, will be in a sober and serious hour remembered by you; and surely it cannot be remembered but with some degree of kindness. I have loved you with virtuous affection; I have honoured you with sincere esteem. Let not all our endearments be forgotten, but let me have in this great distress your pity and your prayers. You see I yet turn to you with my complaints as a settled and unalienable friend; do not, do not drive me from you, for I have not deserved either neglect or hatred.

To the girls, who do not write often, for Susy has written only once, and Miss Thrale owes me a letter, I earnestly recommend, as their guardian and friend, that they remember their Creator in the days of their youth.

I sup-

I suppose you may wish to know how my disease is treated by the physicians. They put a blister upon my back, and two from my ear to my throat, one on a side. The blister on the back has done little, and those on the throat have not risen. I bullied and bounced, (it sticks to our last sand) and compelled the apothecary to make his salve according to the Edinburgh Dispensatory, that it might adhere better. I have two on now of my own prescription. They likewise give me salt of hartshorn, which I take with no great confidence, but am satisfied that what can be done is done for me.

O God! give me comfort and confidence in Thee: forgive my sins; and if it be thy good pleasure, relieve my diseases for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

I am almost ashamed of this querulous letter, but now it is written, let it go.

I am, &c.

To the above letter we see no answer: and why? yet she wrote twice a week to Milan to my certain knowledge.

L E T T E R CCCII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAREST MADAM, London, June 20, 1783.

I THINK to fend you for some time a regular diary. You will forgive the gross images which disease must necessarily present. Dr. Lawrence said, that medical treatises should be always in Latin.

The two vesicatories which I procured with so much trouble did not perform well, for, being applied to the lower part of the fauces, a part always in motion, their adhesion was continually broken. The back, I hear, is very properly flayed.

I have now healing application to the cheeks, and have my head covered with one formidable diffusion of cantharides, from which Dr. Heberden assures me that experience promises great effects. He told me likewise, that my utterance has been improved since yesterday, of which, however, I

VOL. II.

T

was

274. LETTERS TO AND FROM

was less certain; though doubtless they who see me at intervals can best judge.

I never had any distortion of the countenance, but what Dr. Brocklesby called a little prolapsus, which went away the second day.

I was this day directed to eat flesh, and I dined very copiously upon roasted lamb and boiled pease: I then went to sleep in a chair, and when I waked, I found Dr. Brocklesby sitting by me, and fell to talking with him in such a manner as made me glad, and, I hope, made me thankful. The Doctor fell to repeating Juvenal's ninth satire; but I let him see that the province was mine.

I am to take wine to-night, and hope it will do me good.

I am, &c.

LETTER CCCIII.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

London, June 21, 1783.

I CONTINUE my journal. When I went to bed last night, I found the new covering of my head uneasy, not painful, rather too warm. I had however a comfortable and placid night. My physicians this morning thought my amendment not inconsiderable; and my friends who visited me said, that my look was spritely and cheerful. Nobody has shown more affection than Paradise Langton and he were with me a long time to-day. I was almost tired.

When my friends were gone I took another liberal dinner, such as my physicians recommended, and slept after it, but without such evident advantage as was the effect of yesterday's *siesta*. Perhaps the sleep was not quite so sound, for I am harassed by a very disagreeable operation of the cantharides, which

T 2

I am

274 LETTERS TO AND FROM

was less certain ; though doubtless they who see me at intervals can best judge.

I never had any distortion of the countenance, but what Dr. Brocklesby called a little prolapsus, which went away the second day.

I was this day directed to eat flesh, and I dined very copiously upon roasted lamb and boiled pease : I then went to sleep in a chair, and when I waked, I found Dr. Brocklesby sitting by me, and fell to talking with him in such a manner as made me glad, and, I hope, made me thankful. The Doctor fell to repeating Juvenal's ninth satire ; but I let him see that the province was mine.

I am to take wine to-night, and hope it will do me good.

I am, &c.

LETTER CCCIII.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

London, June 21, 1783.

I CONTINUE my journal. When I went to bed last night, I found the new covering of my head uneasy, not painful, rather too warm. I had however a comfortable and placid night. My physicians this morning thought my amendment not inconsiderable; and my friends who visited me said, that my look was spritely and cheerful. Nobody has shown more affection than Paradise. Langton and he were with me a long time today. I was almost tired.

When my friends were gone I took another liberal dinner, such as my physicians recommended, and slept after it, but without such evident advantage as was the effect of yesterday's *siesta*. Perhaps the sleep was not quite so sound, for I am harassed by a very disagreeable operation of the cantharides, which

T 2

I am

I am endeavouring to control by copious dilution.

My disorders are in other respects less than usual; my disease, whatever it was, seems collected into this one dreadful effect. My breath is free; the constrictions of the chest are suspended, and my nights pass without oppression.

To-day I received a letter of consolation and encouragement from an unknown hand, without a name, kindly and piously, though not enthusiastically written.

I had just now from Mr. Pepys a message, enquiring in your name after my health, of this I can give no account.

I am, Madam,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R CCCIV.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM, London, June 23, 1783.

I THANK you for your kind letter, and will continue my diary. On the night of the 21st I had very little rest, being kept awake by an effect of the cantharides, not indeed formidable, but very tiresome and painful. On the 22d the physicians released me from the salts of hartshorn. The cantharides continued their persecution, but I was set free from it at night. I had however not much sleep, but I hope for more to-night. The vesications on my back and face are healing, and only that on my head continues to operate.

My friends tell me that my power of utterance improves daily, and Dr. Heberden declares that he hopes to find me almost well to-morrow.

Palfies are more common than I thought. I have been visited by four friends who have had each a stroke, and one of them two.

Your offer, dear Madam, of coming to me, is charmingly kind; but I will lay up for future use, and then let it not be considered as obsolete; a time of dereliction may come, when I may have hardly any other friend, but in the present exigency I cannot name one who has been deficient in civility or attention. What man can do for man has been done for me. Write to me very often.

I am, Madam,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R CCCV.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

THE journal now, like other journals, grows very *dry*, as it is not diversified either by operations or events. Less and less

DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON. 279

is done, and, I thank God, less and less is suffered every day. The physicians seem to think that little more needs to be done. I find that they consulted to-day about sending me to Bath, and thought it needless. Dr. Heberden takes leave to-morrow.

This day I watered the garden, and did not find the watering-pots more heavy than they have hitherto been, and my breath is more free.

Poor dear ——— has just been here with a present. If it ever falls in your way to do him good, let him have your favour.

Both Queeney's letter and yours gave me to-day great pleasure. Think as well and as kindly of me as you can, but do not flatter me. Cool reciprocations of esteem are the great comforts of life; hyperbolical praise only corrupts the tongue of the one, and the ear of the other.

London,
June 24, 1783.

I am, &c.

Your letter has no date.

LETTER CCCVI.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAREST MADAM, London, June 28, 1783.

YOUR letter is just such as I desire, and as from you I hope always to deserve.

The black dog I hope always to resist, and in time to drive, though I am deprived of almost all those that used to help me. The neighbourhood is impoverished. I had once Richardson and Lawrence in my reach. Mrs. Allen is dead. My house has lost Levet, a man who took interest in every thing, and therefore ready at conversation. Mrs. Williams is so weak that she can be a companion no longer. When I rise my breakfast is solitary, the black dog waits to share it, from breakfast to dinner he continues barking, except that Dr. Brocklesby for a little keeps him at a distance. Dinner with a sick woman you may venture to suppose not much better than solitary. After dinner, what remains but to count the clock, and hope for

that sleep which I can scarce expect. Night comes at last, and some hours of restlessness and confusion bring me again to a day of solitude. What shall exclude the black dog from an habitation like this? If I were a little richer, I would perhaps take some cheerful female into the house.

Your Bath news shews me new calamities. I am afraid Mrs. L——s is left with a numerous family, very slenderly supplied. Mrs. Sheward is an old maid, I am afraid, yet *sur le pavé*.

——, if he were well, would be well enough liked; his daughter has powers and knowledge, but no art of making them agreeable.

I must touch my journal. Last night fresh flies were put to my head, and hindered me from sleeping. To-day I fancy myself incommoded by heat.

I have, however, watered the garden both yesterday and to-day, just as I watered the laurels in the island.

I am, Madam,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R CCCVII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

A MONG those that have enquired after me, Sir Philip is one; and Dr. Burney was one of those who came to see me. I have had no reason to complain of indifference or neglect. Dick Burney is come home five inches taller.

Yesterday in the evening I went to church, and have been to-day to see the great burning glass, which does more than was ever done before by the transmission of the rays, but is not equal in power to those which reflect them. It wastes a diamond placed in the focus, but causes no diminution of pure gold. Of the rubies exposed to its action, one was made more vivid, the other paler. To see the glass, I climbed up stairs to the garret, and then up a ladder to the leads, and talked to the artist rather too long; for my voice, though clear and distinct for a little while,

soon

soon tires and falters. The organs of speech are yet very feeble, but will I hope be by the mercy of God finally restored: at present, like any other weak limb, they can endure but little labour at once. Would you not have been very sorry for me when I could scarcely speak?

Fresh cantharides were this morning applied to my head, and are to be continued some time longer. If they play me no treacherous tricks, they give me very little pain.

Let me have your kindness and your prayers; and think on me, as on a man who, for a very great portion of your life, has done you all the good he could, and desires still to be considered,

Madam,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R CCCVIII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAREST MADAM, London, July 1, 1783.

THIS morning I took the air by a ride to Hampstead, and this afternoon I dined with the club. But fresh cantharides were this day applied to my head.

Mr. Cator called on me to-day, and told that he had invited you back to Streatham. I shewed the unfitness of your return thither, till the neighbourhood should have lost its habits of depredation, and he seemed to be satisfied. He invited me very kindly and cordially to try the air of Beckenham, and pleased me very much by his affectionate attention to Miss Vezy. There is much good in his character, and much usefulness in his knowledge.

Queeney seems now to have forgotten me. Of the different appearance of the hills and vallies an account may perhaps be given,
with-

without the supposition of any prodigy. If she had been out and the evening was breezy, the exhalations would rise from the low grounds very copiously; and the wind that swept and cleared the hills, would only by its cold condense the vapours of the sheltered vallies.

Murphy is just gone from me; he visits me very kindly, and I have no unkindness to complain of.

I am sorry that Sir Philip's request was not treated with more respect, nor can I imagine what has put them so much out of humour: I hope their business is prosperous.

I hope that I recover by degrees; but my nights are restless; and you will suppose the nervous system to be somewhat enfeebled.

— I am, Madam,

Your, &c.

LETTER CCCIX.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

London, July 3, 1783.

DR. Brocklesby yesterday dismissed the cantharides, and I can now find a soft place upon my pillow. Last night was cool, and I rested well, and this morning I have been a friend at a poetical difficulty. Here is now a glimpse of day-light again; but how near is the evening—none can tell, and I will not prognosticate; we all know that from none of us it can be far distant; may none of us know this in vain!

I went, as I took care to boast, on Tuesday, to the club, and hear that I was thought to have performed as well as usual. I dined on fish, with the wing of a small Turkey chick, and left roast beef, goose, and venison pye untouched. I live much on peas, and never had them so good, for so long a time, in any year that I can remember.

When

When do you go to Weymouth? and why do you go? only I suppose to a new place, and the reason is sufficient to those who have no reason to withhold them.

* * * knows well enough how to live on four hundred a year, but where is he to have it? Had * * * any thing of his own unsettled?

I am glad that Mrs. Sheward talks of me, and loves me, and have in this still scene of life great comfort in reflecting that I have given very few reason to hate me; I hope scarcely any man has known me closely but for his benefit, or cursorily but to his innocent entertainment. Tell me, you that know me best, whether this be true, that according to your answer I may continue my practice, or try to mend it.

Along with your kind letter yesterday came one likewise very kind from the Astons at Lichfield; but I do not know whether, as the summer is so far advanced, I shall travel so far, though I am not without hopes that frequent change of air may fortify me against the winter, which has been, in modern phrase, of late years very *inimical* to,

Madam, Your, &c.

L E T T E R CCCX.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

London, July 5, 1783.

THAT Dr. * * * * is offended I am very sorry, but if the same state of things should recur, I could not do better. Dr. Brocklesby is, you know, my neighbour, and could be ready at call; he had for some time very diligently solicited my friendship: I depended much upon the skill of Dr. Heberden, and him I had seen lately at Brocklesby's. Heberden I could not bear to miss, Brocklesby could not decently be missed, and to call three, had made me ridiculous by the appearance of self-importance. Mine was one of those unhappy cases in which something must be wrong. I can only be sorry.

I have now no Doctor, but am left to shift for myself as opportunity shall serve. I am going next week with * * * to * * * * *, where I expect not to stay long. Eight children in a small house will probably make a chorus not
very

A. Langton

very diverting. My purpose is to change the air frequently this summer.

Of the imitation of my stile, in a criticism on Gray's Church-yard, I forgot to make mention. The authour is, I believe, utterly unknown, for Mr. Steevens cannot hunt him out. I know little of it, for though it was sent me I never cut the leaves open. I had a letter with it representing it to me as my own work ; in such an account to the publick there may be humour, but to myself it was neither serious nor comical. I suspect the writer to be wrongheaded ; as to the noise which it makes I have never heard it, and am inclined to believe that few attacks either of ridicule or invective make much noise, but by the help of those that they provoke.

I think Queeney's silence has something either of laziness or unkindness ; and I wish her free from both, for both are very unamiable, and will both increase by indulgence. Susy is I believe at a loss for matter. I shall be glad to see pretty Sophy's production.

I hope I still continue mending. My organs are yet feeble.

I am, Madam,

Your, &c.

LETTER CCCXI.

To Miss SUSANNA THRALE.

DEAREST MISS SUSY,

WHEN you favoured me with your letter, you seemed to be in want of materials to fill it, having met with no great adventures either of peril or delight, nor done or suffered any thing out of the common course of life.

When you have lived longer, and considered more, you will find the common course of life very fertile of observation and reflection. Upon the common course of life must our thoughts and our conversation be generally employed. Our general course of life must denominate us wise or foolish; happy or miserable: if it is well regulated we pass on prosperously and smoothly; as it is neglected we live in embarrassment, perplexity, and uneasiness.

Your time, my love, passes, I suppose, in devotion, reading, work, and company. Of
your

DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON. 291

your devotions, in which I earnestly advise you to be very punctual, you may not perhaps think it proper to give me an account; and of work, unless I understood it better, it will be of no great use to say much; but books and company will always supply you with materials for your letters to me, as I shall always be pleased to know what you are reading, and with what you are pleased; and shall take great delight in knowing what impression new modes or new characters make upon you, and to observe with what attention you distinguish the tempers, dispositions, and abilities of your companions.

A letter may be always made out of the books of the morning or talk of the evening; and any letters from you, my dearest, will be welcome to

Your, &c.

LETTER CCCXII.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

London, July 8, 1783.

TIME makes great changes of opinion. ***** ran perpetually after ——— in the lifetime of that lady, to whom he so earnestly desired to be reunited in the grave. I am glad ——— is not left in poverty, her disease seems to threaten her with a full share of misery.

Of Miss H——, whom you charge me with forgetting, I know not why I should much foster the remembrance, for I can do her no good; but I honestly recommend her to your pity; for nothing but the opportunity of emptying her bosom with confidence can save her from madness. To know at least one mind so disordered is not without its use; it shows the danger of admitting passively the first irruption of irregular imaginations.

Langton

Langton and I have talked of passing a little time at Rochester together, till neither knows well how to refuse, though I think he is not eager to take me, and I am not desirous to be taken. His family is numerous, and his house little. I have let him know, for his relief, that I do not mean to burden him more than a week. He is however among those who wish me well, and would exert what power he has to do me good.

I think you will do well in going to Weymouth, for though it be nothing, it is, at least to the young ones, a new nothing, and they will be able always to tell that they have seen Weymouth. I am for the present willing enough to persuade myself, that a short succession of trifles may contribute to my re-establishment, but hope to return, for it is surely time, to something of importance.

I am, dear Madam,

Your, &c.

LETTER CCCXIII.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

London, July 23, 1783.

I HAVE been thirteen days at Rochester, and am just now returned. I came back by water in a common boat twenty miles for a shilling, and when I landed at Billingsgate I carried my budget myself to Cornhill before I could get a coach, and was not much incommoded.

I have had Miss Susy's and Miss Sophy's letters, and now I am come home can write and write. While I was with Mr. Langton we took four little journies in a chaise, and made one little voyage on the Medway, with four misses and their maid, but they were very quiet.

I am very well, except that my voice soon falters, and I have not slept well, which I imputed to the heat, which has been such as I never felt before for so long time. Three days

DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON. 295

days we had of very great heat about ten years ago. I infer nothing from it but a good harvest.

Whether this short rustication has done me any good I cannot tell, I certainly am not worse, and am very willing to think myself better. Are you better? Sophy gave but a poor account of you. Do not let your mind wear out your body.

I am, Madam,

Your, &c.

LETTER CCCXIV.

TO MISS SOPHIA THRALE.

DEAREST MISS SOPHY, London, July 24, 1783.

BY an absence from home, and for one reason and another, I owe a great number of letters, and I assure you that I sit down to write yours first. Why you should think yourself not a favourite, I cannot guess; my

U 4

favour

favour will, I am afraid, never be worth much; but be its value more or less, you are never likely to lose it, and less likely if you continue your studies with the same diligence as you have begun them.

Your proficiencie in arithmetick is not only to be commended, but admired. Your master does not, I suppose, come very often, nor stay very long; yet your advance in the science of numbers is greater than is commonly made by those who, for so many weeks as you have been learning, spend six hours a day in the writing school.

Never think, my Sweet, that you have arithmetick enough; when you have exhausted your master, buy books. Nothing amuses more harmlesly than computation, and nothing is oftener applicable to real business or speculative enquiries. A thousand stories which the ignorant tell, and believe, die away at once, when the computist takes them in his gripe. I hope you will cultivate in yourself a disposition to numerical enquiries; they will give you entertainment in solitude by the practice, and reputation in publick by the effect.

If

If you can borrow *Wilkins's Real Character*, a folio, which the bookfeller can perhaps let you have, you will have a very curious calculation, which you are qualified to consider, to shew that Noah's ark was capable of holding all the known animals of the world, with provision for all the time in which the earth was under water. Let me hear from you soon again.

I am, Madam,

Your, &c.

LETTER CCCXV.

TO MISS SUSANNA THRALE.

DEAR MISS SUSAN,

London, July 26, 1783.

I ANSWER your letter last, because it was received last; and when I have answered it, I am out of debt to your house. A short negligence throws one behind hand. This maxim, if you consider and improve it, will be equivalent to your parson and bird, which is however a very good story, as it shews
how

how far gluttony may proceed, which where it prevails is I think more violent, and certainly more despicable, than avarice itself.

Gluttony is, I think, less common among women than among men. Women commonly eat more sparingly, and are less curious in the choice of meat; but if once you find a woman gluttonous, expect from her very little virtue. Her mind is enslaved to the lowest and grossest temptation.

A friend of mine, who courted a lady of whom he did not know much, was advised to see her eat, and if she was voluptuous at table, to forsake her. He married her however, and in a few weeks came to his adviser with this exclamation, "It is the disturbance of my life to see this woman eat." She was, as might be expected, selfish and brutal, and after some years of discord they parted, and I believe came together no more.

Of men, the examples are sufficiently common. I had a friend, of great eminence in the learned and the witty world, who had hung up some pots on his wall to furnish nests for sparrows. The poor sparrows, not knowing his character, were seduced by the
con-

DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON. 299

convenience, and I never heard any man speak of any future enjoyment with such contortions of delight as he exhibited, when he talked of eating the young ones.

When you do me the favour to write again, tell me something of your studies, your work, or your amusements.

I am, Madam,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R CCCXVI.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM, London, August 13, 1783.

YOUR letter was brought just as I was complaining that you had forgotten me.

I am glad that the ladies find so much novelty at Weymouth. Ovid says, that the fun is undelightfully uniform. They had some expectation of shells, which both by their form and colours have a claim to human curiosity. Of all the wonders, I have had

no

no account, except that Miss Thrale seems pleased with your little voyages.

Sophy mentioned a story which her sisters would not suffer her to tell, because they would tell it themselves, but it has never yet been told me.

Mrs. Ing is, I think, a baronet's daughter, of an ancient house in Staffordshire. Of her husband's father, mention is made in the life of Ambrose Philips.

Of this world, in which you represent me as delighting to live, I can say little. Since I came home I have only been to church, once to Burney's, once to Paradise's, and once to Reynolds's. With Burney I saw Dr. Rose, his new relation, with whom I have been many years acquainted. If I discovered no reliques of disease I am glad, but Fanny's trade is fiction.

I have since partaken of an epidemical disorder, but common evils produce no dejection.

Paradise's company, I fancy, disappointed him; I remember nobody. With Reynolds was the archbishop of Tuam, a man coarse of voice and inelegant of language.

I am now broken with disease, without the alleviation of familiar friendship or domestick society; I have no middle state between clamour and silence, between general conversation and self-tormenting solitude. Levet is dead, and poor Williams is making haste to die: I know not if she will ever more come out of her chamber.

I am now quite alone, but let me turn my thoughts another way.

I am, Madam,

Your, &c.

LETTER CCCXVII.

To Mrs. THRALE.

MADAM,

London, August 20, 1783.

THIS has been a day of great emotion; the office of the Communion of the Sick has been performed in poor Mrs. Williams's chamber. She was too weak to rise from her bed, and is therefore to be supposed unlikely to

to live much longer. She has, I hope, little violent pain, but is wearing out by torpid inappetence and wearisome decay; but all the powers of her mind are in their full vigour, and when she has spirits enough for conversation, she possesses all the intellectual excellence that she ever had. Surely this is an instance of mercy much to be desired by a parting soul.

At home I see almost all my companions dead or dying. At Oxford I have just left Wheeler, the man with whom I most delighted to converse. The sense of my own diseases, and the sight of the world sinking round me, oppress me perhaps too much. I hope that all these admonitions will not be vain, and that I shall learn to die as dear Williams is dying, who was very cheerful before and after this awful solemnity, and seems to resign herself with calmness and hope upon eternal mercy.

I read your last kind letter with great delight; but when I came to *love* and *honour*, what sprung in my mind?—How loved, how honoured once, avails thee not.

I sat to Mrs. Reynolds yesterday for my picture, perhaps the tenth time, and I sat

DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON. 303

near three hours with the patience of *mortal born to bear*; at last she declared it quite finished, and seems to think it fine. I told her it was *Johnson's grimly ghost*. It is to be engraved, and I think *in glided*, &c. will be a good inscription.

I am, Madam,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R CCCXVIII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM, London, August 26, 1783.

THINGS stand with me much as they have done for some time. Mrs. Williams fancies now and then that she grows better, but her vital powers appear to be slowly burning out. Nobody thinks however that she will very soon be quite wasted, and as she suffers me to be of very little use to her, I have determined to pass some time with Mr. Bowles near Salisbury, and have taken a place for Thursday.

Some

Some benefit may be perhaps received from change of air, some from change of company, and some from mere change of place. It is not easy to grow well in a chamber where one has long been sick, and where every thing seen and every person speaking revives and impresses images of pain. Though it be that no man can run away from himself, he may yet escape from many causes of useless uneasiness. That the *mind is its own place*, is the boast of a fallen angel that had learned to lie. External locality has great effects, at least upon all embodied beings. I hope this little journey will afford me at least some suspense of melancholy.

You give but an unpleasing account of your performance at Portland. Your scrambling days are then over. I remember when no Miss and few Masters could have left you behind, or *thrown you out in the pursuit of honour* or of curiosity. But *tempus edax rerum*, and no way has been yet found to draw his teeth.

I am, dear Madam,

Your, &c.

LETTER CCCXIX.

Mrs. THRALE to Dr. JOHNSON.

MY DEAR SIR, Weymouth, August 30, 1783.

I HAD your letter, and am very desirous that change of place may do more for my friend than it has done for myself; yet I am really a little better too, or at least ill *in another way*, which makes it nothing more.—*Variety of wretchedness*: my face is at this time covered over with a frightful erysipelas. The Portland expedition did not end creditably to my corporeal powers, which are grown very weak indeed; and when I felt myself on the precipice unable to go forward or backward, without that help which I could only obtain from a clown upon the hill, my mind was in no good humour neither, and if I had thought on Mrs. Williams at all I should have thought her happier than myself for she has one companion who wishes her long life, and surely that is one very comfortable thing.

The sea here at Weymouth is not half as fine as our old sea on the Suffex coast, and a marine prospect is at best a dull one after the first week: the seasons have no effect on it; and when one has once seen it rough and once seen it smooth, all is over; while every hour of every day produces some change upon a land view, and excites new images in any mind not totally crushed down or exhausted. The look from my window is mighty pretty however, and exhibits so tranquil a scene as it is difficult for old Ocean to display. I can imagine it like the Lake of Geneva, so blue, so still, so elegantly serpentized as if Mr. Brown had *laid it out*. In short this is no *Phœnician* Neptune whose beard is said to be longer than the others, because that place produced the earliest navigators: this shall be an *Otabeite* Neptune, and we will strike a medal of him all shaven and shorn, to shew that no canoe even of the Society Islands need fear him, though ignorant of the art of sailing till the world was got into its *dotage* as Goldsmith said, when he made the sharper talk about cosmogony. This nonsense came into my head as I saw a sailor on horseback this morning, and began thinking what could inspire the ancients to make Neptune the

creator

creator of a horse, for if any thing was ever foreign from the purpose, *that* was foreign, or the man that rode under my window to-day had grievously degenerated.—So as you say, my dear Sir, change of place does one *some* good, by giving one some new thing to think on though but for a moment. I advised our Miss H—— to the same remedy, but have a notion her mind is haunted by one particular image; if so, nothing will cure her; for if the heart be broken 'tis broken like a looking-glass, and the smallest piece will for ever preserve and reflect the same figure till 'tis again ground down into a new mass.

I told you who were our companions, and told you how well I liked them, but at Bath I have those who best *can lengthen* and most *can gladden life*. To one who is never well, and often extremely ill indeed, a place like this, destitute of medical help, keeps the mind in a state of apprehension almost equal to disease, and if any of the girls should be taken bad here (as Sophia seems now half inclinable) what would become of, Dear Sir,

Your faithful servant,

H. L. THRALE.

I will go home now very soon, for I am miserably lean, so thin indeed that you would hardly know me; but flashy mortals waste with concentrated misery like the diamond in your burning-glass: patience more perfect and excellence more complete would come out from the trial undiminished like the pure gold:—but such virtue must be long prayed for and late obtained.

LETTER CCCXX.

To Miss SUSANNA THRALE.

DEAR MISS,

September 9, 1783.

I AM glad that you and your sisters have been at Portland. You now can tell what is a quarry and what is a cliff. Take all opportunities of filling your mind with genuine scenes of nature: description is always fallacious, at least till you have seen realities you cannot know it to be true. This observation might be extended to life, but life cannot be surveyed with the same safety as nature, and it is better to know vice and folly

folly by report than by experience. A painter, says Sydney, mingled in the battle that he might know how to paint it; but his knowledge was useless, for some mischievous sword took away his head. They whose speculation upon characters leads them too far into the world, may lose that nice sense of good and evil by which characters are to be tried. Acquaint yourself therefore both with the pleasing and the terrible parts of nature, but in life wish to know only the good.

Pray shew Mamma this passage of a letter from Dr. Brocklesby: " Mrs. Williams, from
 " mere inanition, has at length paid the great
 " debt to nature, about three o'clock this
 " morning, (Sept. 6.) She died without a
 " struggle, retaining her faculties entire to
 " the very last, and as she expressed it, having
 " set her house in order, was prepared to
 " leave it at the last summons of nature."

I do not now say any thing more than that I am,

My dearest,

Your, &c.

LETTER CCCXXI.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

London, Sept. 22, 1783.

HAPPY are you that have ease and leisure to want intelligence of air-ballons. Their existence is I believe indubitable; but I know not that they can possibly be of any use. The construction is this. The chymical philosophers have discovered a body (which I have forgotten, but will enquire) which, dissolved by an acid, emits a vapour lighter than the atmospherical air. This vapour is caught, among other means, by tying a bladder, compressed upon the bottle in which the dissolution is performed; the vapour rising swells the bladder, and fills it. The bladder is then tied and removed, and another applied, till as much of this light air is collected as is wanted. Then a large spherical case is made, and very large it must be, of the lightest matter than can be found, secured by some method, like that of oiling silk, against all passage of air. Into this are emptied all
the

the bladders of light air, and if there is light air enough it mounts into the clouds, upon the same principle as a bottle filled with water will sink in water, but a bottle filled with æther would float. It rises till it comes to air of equal tenuity with its own, if wind or water does not spoil it on the way. Such, Madam, is an air ballon.

Meteors have been this autumn very often seen, but I have never been in their way.

Poor Williams has I hope seen the end of her afflictions. She acted with prudence and she bore with fortitude. She has left me.

Thou thy weary task hast done,
Home art gone, and ta'en thy wages.

Had she had good humour and prompt elocution, her universal curiosity and comprehensive knowledge would have made her the delight of all that knew her. She left her little to your charity school.

The complaint about which you enquire is a farcocele: I thought it a hydrocele, and heeded it but little. Puncture has detected the mistake: it can be safely suffered no longer. Upon inspection three days ago it was de-

terminated *extrema ventura*. If excision should be delayed there is danger of a gangrene. You would not have me for fear of pain perish in putrescence. I shall I hope, with trust in eternal mercy, lay hold of the possibility of life which yet remains. My health is not bad; the gout is now trying at my feet. My appetite and digestion are good, and my sleep better than formerly: I am not dejected, and I am not feeble. There is however danger enough in such operations at seventy-four.

Let me have your prayers and those of the young dear people.

I am, dear Madam,

Your, &c.

Write soon and often.

DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON. 313

L E T T E R CCCXXII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

MADAM,

London, Oct. 6, 1783.

W H E N I shall give a good and settled account of my health I cannot venture to say; some account I am ready to give, because I am pleased to find that you desire it.

I yet sit without shoes, with my foot upon a pillow, but my pain and weakness are much abated, and I am no longer crawling upon two sticks. To the gout my mind is reconciled by another letter from Mr. Mudge, in which he vehemently urges the excision, and tells me that the gout will secure me from every thing paralytick: if this be true, I am ready to say to the arthritick pains, *Deb! venite ogne di, durate un anno.*

ogni

My physician in ordinary is Dr. Brocklesby, who comes almost every day; my surgeon in Mr. Pott's absence is Mr. Cruikshank, the present reader in Dr. Hunter's school.

school. Neither of them however do much more than look and talk. The general health of my body is as good as you have ever known it, almost as good as I can remember.

The carriage which you supposed made rough by my weakness was the common Salisbury stage, high hung, and driven to Salisbury in a day. I was not fatigued.

Mr. Pott has been out of town, but I expect to see him soon, and will then tell you something of the main affair, of which there seems now to be a better prospect.

This afternoon I have given to Mrs. Cholmondely, Mrs. Way, Lady Sheffield's relation, Mr. Kindersley the describer of Indian manners, and another anonymous lady.

As Mrs. Williams received a pension from Mrs. Montagu, it was fit to notify her death. The account has brought me a letter not only civil but tender; so I hope peace is proclaimed.

*There was no good
intelligence between
Mrs. Montague and
Dr. Johnson. Mrs.
Thrale had blabbered
out the poor opinion
Johnson had of her
late book about
Shakespeare, and the
learned Ladies are
touchy as well, or
more than the
unlearned.*

The state of the Stocks I take to be this:
When in the late exigencies the ministry
gave so high a price for money, all the money
that could be disengaged from trade was lent
to

DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON. 315

to the publick. The stocks sunk because nobody bought them. They have not risen since, because the money being already lent out, nobody has money to lay out upon them till commerce shall by the help of peace bring a new supply. If they cannot rise, they will sometimes fall; for their essence seems to be fluctuation; but the present sudden fall is occasioned by the report of some new disturbances and demands which the Irish are machinating.

I am, Madam,

Your, &c.

LETTER CCCXXIII.

To Mrs. THRALE.

London, October 9, 1783.

Two nights ago Mr. Burke sat with me a long time; he seems much pleased with his journey. We had both seen Stonehenge this summer for the first time. I told him
that

that the view had enabled me to confute two opinions which have been advanced about it. One, that the materials are not natural stones, but an artificial composition hardened by time. This notion is as old as Camden's time; and has this strong argument to support it, that stone of that species is no where to be found. The other opinion, advanced by Dr. Charlton, is, that it was erected by the Danes.

Mr. Bowles made me observe, that the transverse stones were fixed on the perpendicular supporters by a knob formed on the top of the upright stone, which entered into a hollow cut in the crossing stone. This is a proof that the enormous edifice was raised by a people who had not yet the knowledge of mortar; which cannot be supposed of the Danes who came hither in ships, and were not ignorant certainly of the arts of life. This proves likewise the stones not to be factitious; for they that could mould such durable masses could do much more than make mortar, and could have continued the transverse from the upright part with the same paste.

You have doubtless seen Stonehenge, and if you have not, I should think it a hard task to make an adequate description.

It is, in my opinion, to be referred to the earliest habitation of the Island, as a Druidical monument of at least two thousand years; probably the most ancient work of man upon the Island. Salisbury cathedral and its neighbour Stonehenge, are two eminent monuments of art and rudeness, and may show the first essay, and the last perfection, in architecture.

I have not yet settled my thoughts about the generation of light air, which I indeed once saw produced, but I was at the height of my great complaint. I have made enquiry, and shall soon be able to tell you how to fill a ballon.

I am, Madam,

Your, &c.

LETTER CCCXXIV.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM, London, October 21, 1783.

I HAVE formerly heard, what you perhaps have heard too, that—

The wheel of life is daily turning round,
And nothing in this world of certainty is found.

When in your letter of the eleventh, you told me that my two letters had obliged, consoled, and delighted you, I was much elevated, and longed for a larger answer; but when the answer of the nineteenth came, I found that the obliging, consolatory, and delightful paragraphs had made so little impression, that you want again to be told what those papers were written to tell you, and of what I can now tell you nothing new. I am as I was; with no pain and little inconvenience from the great complaint, and feeling nothing from the gout but a little tenderness and weakness.

Physi-

Phyfiognomy, as it is a Greek word, ought to found the G: but the French and Italians, I think, spell it without the G; and from them perhaps we learned to pronounce it. G, I think, is founded in formal, and sunk in familiar language.

Mr. Pott was with me this morning, and still continues his disinclination to *fire and sword*. The operation is therefore still suspended; not without hopes of relief from some easier and more natural way.

Mrs. Porter the tragedian, with whom ——— spent part of his earlier life, was so much the favourite of her time, that she was welcomed on the stage when she trod it by the help of a stick. She taught her pupils no violent graces; for she was a woman of very gentle and ladylike manners, though without much extent of knowledge, or activity of understanding.

You are now retired, and have nothing to impede self-examination or self-improvement. Endeavour to reform that instability of attention which your last letter has happened to betray. Perhaps it is natural for those that have much within to think little on things without; but whoever lives heedlessly lives

Her attention was all turned towards Milan.

but in a mist, perpetually deceived by false appearances of the past, without any certain reliance on recollection. Perhaps this begins to be my state; but I have not done my part very sluggishly, if it now begins.

The hour of solitude is now come, and Williams is gone. But I am not, I hope, improperly dejected. A little I read, and a little I think.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R CCCXXV.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

M A D A M,

London, October 27, 1783.

YOU may be very reasonably weary of sickness; it is neither pleasant to talk nor to hear of it. I hope soon to lose the disgusting topick; for I have now neither pain nor sickness. My ancles are weak, and my feet tender. I have not tried to walk much above a hundred yards, and was glad to come back upon wheels. The Doctor and Mr. Metcalf
have

have taken me out. I sleep uncertainly and unseasonably. This is the sum of my complaint. I have not been so well for two years past. The great malady is neither heard, seen, felt, nor—understood. But I am very solitary.

Semperque relinqui
Sola fibi, semper longam incommitata videtur
Ire viam.

But I have begun to look among my books, and hope that I am all, whatever that was, which I have ever been.

Mrs. Siddons in her visit to me behaved with great modesty and propriety, and left nothing behind her to be censured or despised. Neither praise nor money, the two powerful corrupters of mankind, seem to have depraved her. I shall be glad to see her again. Her brother Kemble calls on me, and pleases me very well. Mrs. Siddons and I talked of plays; and she told me her intention of exhibiting this winter the characters of Constance, Catherine, and Isabella in Shakespeare.

I have had this day a letter from Mr. Mudge; who, with all his earnestness for operation,

ration, thinks it better to wait the effects of time, and, as he says, to let well alone. To this the patient naturally inclines, though I am afraid of having the knife yet to endure when I can bear it less. Cruickshank was even now in doubt of the event; but Pott, though never eager, had, or discovered, less fear.

If I was a little cross, would it not have made patient Grisel cross, to find that you had forgotten the letter that you was answering? But what did I care, if I did not love you? You need not fear that another should get my kindness from you; that kindness which you could not throw away if you tried, you surely cannot lose while you desire to keep it.

I am,

Madam, Your, &c.

I have a letter signed S. A. Thrall; I take S. A. to be Miss Sophy: but who is bound to recollect initials? A name should be written, if not fully, yet so that it cannot be mistaken.

L E T T E R CCCXXVI.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

M A D A M,

London, Nov. 1, 1783.

YOU will naturally wish to know what was done by the robbers at the brewhouse. They climbed by the help of the lamp iron to the covering of the door, and there opening the window, which was never fastened, entered and went down to the parlour, and took the plate off the sideboard; but being in haste, and probably without light, they did not take it all. They then unlocked the street-door, and locking it again, carried away the key. The whole loss, as Mr. Perkins told me, amounts to near fifty pounds.

Mr. Pott bade me this day take no more care about the tumour. The gout too is almost well in spite of all the luxury to which my friends have tempted me by a succession of pheasants, partridges, and other delicacies. But Nature has got the better. I hope to walk to church to-morrow.

An air ballon has been lately procured by our virtuosi, but it performed very little to their expectation.

The air with which these balls are filled, is procured by dissolving filings in the vitriolick (or I suppose sulphureous) acid; but the smoke of burnt straw may be used, though its levity is not so great.

If a case could be found at once light and strong, a man might mount with his will, and go whither the winds would carry him. The case of the ball which came hither was of goldbeaters skin. The cases which have hitherto been used are apparently defective, for the ball came to the ground; which they could never do, unless there were some breach made.

How old is the boy that likes Rambler better than apples and pears?

I shall be glad of Miss Sophy's letter, and will soon write to S. A.; who, since she is not Sophy, must be Susy. Methinks it is long since I heard from Queeney.

I am, &c.

LETTER CCCXXVII.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM, London, Nov. 13, 1783.

SINCE you have written to me with the attention and tenderness of ancient time, your letters give me a great part of the pleasure which a life of solitude admits. You will never bestow any share of your good will on one who deserves better. Those that have loved longest love best. A sudden blaze of kindness may by a single blast of coldness be extinguished, but that fondness which length of time has connected with many circumstances, and occasions, though it may for a while be suppressed by disgust or resentment, with or without a cause, is hourly revived by accidental recollection. To those that have lived long together, every thing heard and every thing seen, recalls some pleasure communicated, or some benefit conferred, some petty quarrel, or some slight endearment. Esteem of great powers, or amiable qualities

Y 3

newly

newly discovered, may embroider a day or a week, but a friendship of twenty years is interwoven with the texture of life. A friend may be often found and lost, but an *old friend* never can be found, and Nature has provided that he cannot easily be lost.

I have not forgotten the Davenants, though they seem to have forgotten me. I began very early to tell them what they have commonly found to be true. I am sorry to hear of their building. I have always warned those whom I loved, against that mode of ostentatious waste.

You seem to mention Lord Kilmurrey as a stranger. We were at his house in Cheshire; and he one day dined with Sir Lynch. What he tells of the epigram is not true, but perhaps he does not know it to be false. Do not you remember how he rejoiced in having *no* park? he could not disoblige his neighbours by sending them *no* venison.

The frequency of death, to those who look upon it in the leisure of Arcadia, is very dreadful. We all know what it should teach us; let us all be diligent to learn. Lucy Porter has lost her brother. But whom I have lost
—let

—let me not now remember. Let not your *She was in no*
loss be added to the mournful catalogue. *danger of that,*
 Write soon again to *whatever she might*
make Johnson believe.

Madam,

Your, &c.

LETTER CCCXXVIII.

To Miss S. A. THRALE.

DEAR MISS,

Nov. 18, 1783.

HERE is a whole week, and nothing heard
 from your house. Baretti said what a
wicked house it would be, and a wicked house
it is. Of you however I have no complaint
 to make, for I owe you a letter. Still I live
 here by my own self, and have had of late
 very bad nights; but then I have had a pig
 to dinner, which Mr. Perkins gave me. Thus
 life is chequered.

a hint I gave to
Johnson; but he
could not take it,
because he never
thought or could
think of Pizze.

I cannot tell you much news, because I see
 nobody that you know. Do you read the
 Tatlers? They are part of the books which
 every body should read, because they are the

sources of conversation, therefore make them part of your library. Bickerstaff, in the *Tatler*, gives as a specimen of familiar letters, an account of his cat. I could tell you as good things of Lily the white kitling, who is now at full growth, and very well behaved; but I do not see why we should descend below human beings, and of one human being I can tell something that you will like to hear.

A friend, whose name I will tell when your Mamma has tried to guess it, sent to my physician to enquire whether this long train of illness had brought me into any difficulties for want of money, with an invitation to send to him for what occasion required. I shall write this night to thank him, having no need to borrow.

She could make herself look as she liked to look, and to a friend of Johnson she did not like to look well.

I have seen Mr. Seward since his return only once; he gave no florid account of my mistress's health. Tell her that I hearken every day after a letter from her, and do not be long before you write yourself to,

My dear,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R CCCXXIX.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM, London, Nov. 20, 1783.

I BEGAN to grieve and wonder that I had no letter, but not being much accustomed to fetch in evil by circumspection or anticipation, did not suspect that the omission had so dreadful a cause as the sickness of one of my dears. As her physician thought so well of her when you wrote, I hope she is now out of danger. You do not tell me her disease; and perhaps have not been able yourself fully to understand it. I hope it is not of the cephalick race.

That frigid stillness with which my pretty Sophy melts away, exhibits a temper very incommodious in sickness, and by no means amiable in the tenour of life. Incommuni-
cative taciturnity neither imparts nor invites
friendship, but reposes on a stubborn suffi-
ciency self-centered, and neglects the inter-
change

*This is the present
case of Mary
rather than Sophy.*

change of that social officiousness by which we are habitually endeared to one another. They that mean to make no use of friends, will be at little trouble to gain them; and to be without friendship, is to be without one of the first comforts of our present state. To have no assistance from other minds, in resolving doubts, in appeasing scruples, in balancing deliberations, is a very wretched destitution. If therefore my loves have this silence by temper, do not let them have it by principle; show them that it is a perverse and inordinate disposition, which must be counteracted and reformed. Have I said enough?

Poor Dr. Taylor represents himself as ill; and I am afraid is worse than in the summer. My nights are very bad; but of the farcocele I have now little but the memory.

I am, Madam,

Your, &c,

LETTER CCCXXX.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM, London, Nov. 24, 1783.

THE post came in late to-day, and I had lost hopes. If the distress of my dear little girl keep me anxious, I have much consolation from the maternal and domestick character of your dear letters.

I do not much fear her pretty life, because scarcely any body dies of her disorder; but it is an unpromising entry upon a new period of life: and there is, I suspect, danger lest she should have to struggle for some years with a tender, irritable, and as it is not very properly called, a nervous constitution. But we will hope better; and please ourselves with thinking that nature, or physick, will gain a complete victory; that dear Sophy will quite recover, and that she and her sister will love one another one degree more for having felt and excited pity, for having wanted and given help.

I re-

I received yesterday from your physicians a note, from which I received no information; they put their heads together to tell me nothing. Be pleased to write punctually yourself, and leave them to their trade. Let me have something every post till my dear Sophy is better.

My nights are often very troublesome, so that I try to sleep in the day. The old convulsions of the chest have a mind to fasten their fangs again upon me. I am afraid that winter will pinch me. But I will struggle with it, and hope to hold out yet against heat and cold.

I am, Madam,

Your, &c.

LETTER CCCXXXI.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

London, Nov. 27, 1783.

I HAD to-day another trifling letter from the physicians. Do not let them fill your mind with terrours which perhaps they have not in their

their own; neither suffer yourself to sit forming comparisons between Sophy and her dear father; between whom there can be no other resemblance, than that of sickness to sickness. Hystericks and apoplexies have no relation. Hystericks commonly cease at the times when apoplexies attack; and very rarely can be said to shorten life. They are the bugbears of disease, of great terror but little danger.

Mrs. Byron has been with me to-day to enquire after Sophy; I sent her away free from the anxiety which she brought with her.

Do however what the Doctors order; they know well enough what is to be done. My pretty Sophy will be well; and Bath will ring with the great cure.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R CCCXXXII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

London, Nov. 29, 1783.

*My dear Sophy
and affectionate
daughter
the best of friends
and so say I.*

THE life of my dear, sweet, pretty, lovely,
delicious Miss Sophy is safe; let us re-
turn thanks to the great Giver of existence,
and pray that her continuance amongst us
may be a blessing to herself and to those that
love her. Multos et felices, my dear girl.

*London, Nov. 29, 1783.
My dear Sophy
became the
best of friends
and so say I.
My dear Sophy
became the
best of friends
and so say I.
My dear Sophy
became the
best of friends
and so say I.*

Now she is recovered, she must write me a
little history of her sufferings, and impart her
schemes of study and improvement. Life, to
be worthy of a rational being, must be al-
ways in progression; we must always purpose
to do more or better than in time past. The
mind is enlarged and elevated by mere pur-
poses, though they end as they begin by airy
contemplation. We compare and judge, though
we do not practise.

She will go back to her arithmetick again;
a science which will always delight her more,

DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON. 335

as by advancing further she discerns more of its use, and a science suited to Sophy's ease of mind; for you told in the last winter that she loved metaphysics more than romances. Her choice is certainly as laudable as it is uncommon; but I would have her like what is good in both.

God bless you and your children; so says,

Dear Madam,

Your old Friend.

L E T T E R CCCXXXIII.

Mrs. THRALE to DR. JOHNSON.

Nov. 31, 1783.

I AM very ill indeed, my dear Sir, but our pretty Sophy being now so *near* at least to recovery my fingers are grown more steady, and I will endeavour to write without agitation once again. She has had a severe illness; so severe, that few men however wise or strong would have endured it with greater resolution. The fullen courage you speak of in the letter dated twenty is certainly not pleasing;

pleasing; but the more one lives on to see softness seduced, flexibility despised, and gentleness insulted, the more contentedly one bears with a disposition so different from one's own. There is a good deal of body too in all this; a good deal of this temper I mean seems connected with corporeal causes, and cephalick disorders seem to haunt people of that turn more than others; who though they may be tortured by various maladies, are seldom afflicted with those dreadful headaches that enchain the faculties, as if by magick, and render complaint nearly as difficult as recovery. Sophia will return to her study of arithmetick in proper time; it appears to me a study well suited to one who has a distaste of fiction because it resembles falsehood. If truth can be found in any sublunary science, numbers will produce it, for to that at last almost all other sciences refer for confirmation.

This period she has copied out of the book, in which she treasured up all that Johnson said that was any way remarkable.

Were the mother as likely to enjoy life and health again as the daughter is, we would perhaps struggle to obtain the advantage of Mr. Herschel's acquaintance. This famous astronomer, whose discoveries, or whose hope of future discoveries begin to fill the mouths

of our Bath talkers, and I fancy my friend Mrs. Lewis could introduce me, though God knows she as well as myself have nearer concerns to puzzle about than lunar ones; and indeed when I think upon the desperate state of oblivion into which are fallen the wonders promised by Helvetius, and that *selenography* which I believe procured him a pension too from Lewis the Fourteenth, my heart recoils at the name of astronomical discoveries, and trembles lest the star of King George should in some future age be consigned to keep company with the firmament of John Sobieski. In the mean time who can help smiling at the expressions used by Derham, Ray, and others, who write on these subjects, and fancy they are exalting the glory of God when they tell us, in what a *workman-like* manner he has made the world, &c.? You hate all notion of national character I know, yet 'tis difficult to deny that none but a *true Briton* could think in such a manner when praising his Creator; as it is impossible not to discern the Frenchman in archbishop Fenelon's latter conversations when he says, *Si j'aurai l'honneur de voir Dieu je ne manquerai guères de lui recommander bien l'ame du Roi de France.* I have not his life with

me here, but have a notion those are the very words.

You will not suspect me of wanting respect for these worthies: what christian lives who can refuse his reverence to Cambray's piety or Derham's learning? but you will have me write, and I am miserably ill, very peevish and very perverse, and 'twere better you quarrelled with me about departed philosophers, than that you accused me of wanting good-will towards you, of whom no person living can think more highly than does,

Dear Sir,

Your faithful humble Servant,

H. L. THRALE.

The Girls will write soon and tell you all our conjectures.

LETTER CCCXXXIV.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM, London, Dec. 13, 1783.

I THINK it long since I wrote, and sometimes venture to hope that you think it long too. The intermission has been filled with spasms, opiates, sleepless nights, and heavy days. These convulsions of my breast shorten my breath; whether they will much shorten my life I know not, but I have been for some time past very comfortless. My friends here ever continue kind, and much notice is taken of me.

I had two pretty letters from Susy and Sophy, to which I will send answers, for they are two dear girls. You must all guess again at my friend.

I dined about a fortnight ago with three old friends; we had not met together for thirty years, and one of us thought the other grown very old. In the thirty years two of our set

have died: our meeting may be supposed to be somewhat tender. I boasted that I had passed the day with three friends, and that no mention had been made among any of us of the air ballon, which has taken full possession, with a very good claim, of every philosophical mind and mouth. Do you not wish for the flying coach?

Take care of your own health, compose your mind, and you have yet strength of body to be well.

I am, Madam,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R CCCXXXV.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

London, Dec. 27, 1783.

THE wearisome solitude of the long evenings did indeed suggest to me the convenience of a club in my neighbourhood, but I have been hindered from attending it by want of breath. If I can complete the scheme, you shall have the names and the regulations.

The

The time of the year, for I hope the fault is rather in the weather than in me, has been very hard upon me. The muscles of my breast are much convulsed. Dr. Heberden recommends opiates, of which I have such horror that I do not think of them but *in extremis*. I was however driven to them last night for refuge, and having taken the usual quantity durst not go to bed, for fear of that uneasiness to which a supine posture exposes me, but rested all night in a chair with much relief, and have been to-day more warm, active, and cheerful.

You have more than once wondered at my complaint of solitude, when you hear that I am crowded with visits. *Inopem me copia fecit*. Visitors are no proper companions in the chamber of sickness. They come when I could sleep or read, they stay till I am weary, they force me to attend when my mind calls for relaxation, and to speak when my powers will hardly actuate my tongue. The amusements and consolations of languor and depression are conferred by familiar and domestick companions, which can be visited or called at will, and can occasionally be quitted or dismissed, who do not obstruct accommodation

342 LETTERS TO AND FROM

by ceremony, or destroy indolence by awakening effort.

Such society I had with Levet and Williams; such I had where—I am never likely to have it more.

I wish, dear Lady, to you and my dear girls many a cheerful and pious Christmas.

I am,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R CCCXXXVI.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

London, Dec. 31, 1783.

SINCE you cannot guess, I will tell you that the generous man was Gerard Hamilton. I returned him a very thankful and respectful letter.

Your enquiry about Lady Carlisle I cannot answer, for I never saw her, unless perhaps without knowing her at a conversation.

Sir

Sir Joshua has just been here, and knows nothing of Miss Bingham; if one of Lord Lucan's daughters be meant, the eldest is now Lady Spencer; she is languishing in France with a diseased leg, and the third is a child.

Pray send the letter which you think will divert me, for I have much need of entertainment; spiritless, infirm, sleepless and solitary, looking back with sorrow and forward with terror:—but I will stop.

Barry of Ireland had a notion that a man's pulse wore him out; my beating breast wears out me. The physicians yesterday covered it with a blister, of which the effect cannot yet be known. Good God prosper their endeavours! Heberden is of opinion that while the weather is oppressive we must palliate.

In the mean time I am well fed; I have now in the house pheasant, venison, turkey and ham, all unbought. Attention and respect give pleasure, however late or however useless. But they are not useless when they are late; it is reasonable to rejoice, as the day declines, to find that it has been spent with the approbation of mankind.

by ceremony, or destroy indolence by awakening effort.

Such society I had with Levet and Williams; such I had where—I am never likely to have it more.

I wish, dear Lady, to you and my dear girls many a cheerful and pious Christmas.

I am,

Your, &c.

LETTER CCCXXXVI.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM, London, Dec. 31, 1783.

SINCE you cannot guess, I will tell you that the generous man was Gerard Hamilton. I returned him a very thankful and respectful letter.

Your enquiry about Lady Carlisle I cannot answer, for I never saw her, unless perhaps without knowing her at a conversation.

Sir

Sir Joshua has just been here, and knows nothing of Miss Bingham; if one of Lord Lucan's daughters be meant, the eldest is now Lady Spencer; she is languishing in France with a diseased leg, and the third is a child.

Pray send the letter which you think will divert me, for I have much need of entertainment; spiritless, infirm, sleepless and solitary, looking back with sorrow and forward with terror:—but I will stop.

Barry of Ireland had a notion that a man's pulse wore him out; my beating breast wears out me. The physicians yesterday covered it with a blister, of which the effect cannot yet be known. Good God prosper their endeavours! Heberden is of opinion that while the weather is oppressive we must palliate.

In the mean time I am well fed; I have now in the house pheasant, venison, turkey and ham, all unbought. Attention and respect give pleasure, however late or however useless. But they are not useless when they are late; it is reasonable to rejoice, as the day declines, to find that it has been spent with the approbation of mankind.

The ministry is again broken, and to any man who extends his thoughts to national consideration the times are dismal and gloomy. But to a sick man what is the publick?

The new year is at hand; may God make it happy to me, to you, to us all, for Jesus Christ's sake! Amen.

I am, Madam,

Your, &c.

LETTER CCCXXXVII.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

London, Jan. 12, 1784.

IF, as you observe, my former letter was written with trepidation, there is little reason, except the habit of enduring, why this should shew more steadiness. I am confined to the house; I do not know that any things grow better; my physicians direct me to combat the hard weather with opium; I cannot well support its turbulence, and yet cannot

not forbear it, for its immediate effect is ease; having kept me waking all the night it forces sleep upon me in the day, and recompenses a night of tediousness with a day of usefulness. My legs and my thighs grow very tumid: in the mean time my appetite is good, and if my physicians do not flatter me death is rushing upon me. But this is in the hand of God.

The first talk of the sick is commonly of themselves; but if they talk of nothing else, they cannot complain if they are soon left without an audience.

You observe, Madam, that the ballon engages all mankind, and it is indeed a wonderful and unexpected addition to human knowledge; but we have a daring projector, who, disdaining the help of fumes and vapours, is making better than Dædalean wings, with which he will master the ballon and its companions as an eagle masters a goose. It is very seriously true that a subscription of eight hundred pounds has been raised for the wire and workmanship of iron wings; one pair of which, and I think a tail, are now shewn in the Haymarket, and they are

346 LETTERS TO AND FROM

making another pair at Birmingham. The whole is said to weigh two hundred pounds—no specious preparation for flying, but there are those who expect to see him in the sky. When I can leave the house I will tell you more.

I had the same old friends to dine with me on Wednesday, and may say that since I lost sight of you I have had one pleasant day.

I am, Madam,

Your, &c.

Pray send me a direction to Sir ———
Musgrave in Ireland.

LETTER CCCXXXVIII.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

London, Jan. 21, 1784.

DR. Heberden this day favoured me with a visit; and after hearing what I had to tell him of miseries and pains, and comparing my present with my past state, declared me well.

well. That his opinion is erroneous, I know with too much certainty; and yet was glad to hear it, as it set extremities at a greater distance: he who is by his physician thought well, is at least not thought in immediate danger. They therefore whose attention to me makes them talk of my health, will, I hope, soon not drop, but lose their subject. But, alas! I had no sleep last night, and sit now panting over my paper. *Dabit Deus his quoque finem.* I have really hope from spring; and am ready, like Almanzor, to bid the sun *fly swiftly, and leave weeks and months behind him.* The sun has looked for six thousand years upon the world to little purpose, if he does not know that a sick man is almost as impatient as a lover.

Mr. Cator gives such an account of Miss Cecy, as you and all of us must delight to hear; Cator has a rough, manly, independent understanding, and does not spoil it by complaisance; he never speaks merely to please, and seldom is mistaken in things which he has any right to know. I think well of her for pleasing him, and of him for being pleased; and at the close, am delighted to find him delighted with her excellence. Let your children,

dren, dear Madam, be *his* care, and *your* pleasure; close your thoughts upon them, and when sad fancies are excluded, health and peace will return together.

I am, dear Madam,

Your old Friend.

L E T T E R CCCXXXIX.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

London, Feb. 9, 1784.

THE remission of the cold did not continue long enough to afford me much relief. You are, as I perceive, afraid of the opium; I had the same terrour, and admitted its assistance only under the pressure of insupportable distress, as of an auxiliary too powerful and too dangerous. But in this pinching season I cannot live without it; and the quantity which I take is less than it once was.

My physicians flatter me, that the season is a great part of my disease; and that when warm weather restores perspiration, this watery disease will evaporate. I am at least willing to flatter myself.

I have

I have been forced to sit up many nights by an obstinate sleeplessness, which makes the time in bed intolerably tedious, and which continues my drowsiness the following day. Besides, I can sometimes sleep erect, when I cannot close my eyes in a recumbent posture. I have just bespoke a flannel dress, which I can easily slip off and on, as I go into bed, or get out of it. Thus pass my days and nights in morbid wakefulness, in unseasonable sleepiness, in gloomy solitude, with unwelcome visitors, or ungrateful exclusions, in variety of wretchedness. But I snatch every lucid interval, and animate myself with such amusements as the time offers.

One thing which I have just heard, you will think to surpass expectation. The Chaplain of the factory at Petersburg relates, that the Rambler is now, by the command of the Empress, translating into Russian; and has promised when it is printed to send me a copy.

Grant, O Lord, that all who shall read my pages, may become more obedient to thy laws; and when the wretched writer shall appear before thee, extend thy mercy to him, for the sake of Jesus Christ. Amen.

I am, Madam,

Your, &c.

LETTER CCCXL.

To Mrs. THRALE.

MADAM,

London, March 10, 1784.

This arose from his having early imbibed a certain set of notions, that he took for granted to be infallibly true notions; never daring to examine them, and, of course, never suspecting they might possibly be false notions. Had he been a native of Constantinople, of Agra, of Pekin, or of many other places, those notions he would never have imbibed: of course, they would never have made him uneasy.

YOU know I never thought confidence with respect to futurity any part of the character of a brave, a wise, or a good man.

Bravery has no place where it can avail nothing; wisdom impresses strongly the consciousness of those faults, of which it is itself perhaps an aggravation; and goodness, always wishing to be better, and imputing every deficiency to criminal negligence, and every fault to voluntary corruption, never dares to suppose the condition of forgiveness fulfilled, nor what is wanting in the crime supplied by penitence.

This is the state of the best, but what must be the condition of him whose heart will not suffer him to rank himself among the best, or among the good? Such must be his dread of the approaching trial, as will leave him little attention to the opinion of those whom he is

leaving for ever; and the serenity that is not felt, it can be no virtue to feign.

The farcocele ran off long ago, at an orifice made for mere experiment.

The water passed naturally, by God's mercy, in a manner of which Dr. Heberden has seen but few examples. The chirurgeon has been employed to heal some excoriations; and four out of five are no longer under his cure. The physician laid on a blister, and I ordered, by their consent, a salve; but neither succeeded, and neither was very easily healed.

I have been confined from the fourteenth of December, and know not when I shall get out; but I have this day dressed me, as I was dressed in health.

Your kind expressions gave me great pleasure; do not reject me from your thoughts. Shall we ever exchange confidence by the fire-side again?

I hope dear Sophy is better; and intend quickly to pay my debt to Susy.

I am, Madam,

Your, &c.

*He never saw
her again;
though he died
soon after the writing
of this letter, yet
lived long enough
not to have fresh
a wish again.*

LETTER CCCXLI.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM, London, March 16, 1784.

I AM so near to health, as a month ago I despaired of being. The dropfy is almost wholly run away, and the asthma, unless irritated by cold, seldom attacks me. How I shall bear motion I do not yet know. But though I have little of pain, I am wonderfully weak. My muscles have almost lost all their spring; but I hope that warm weather, when it comes, will restore me. More than three months have I now been confined. But my deliverance has been very extraordinary.

Of one thing very remarkable I will tell you. For the asthma, and perhaps other disorders, my physicians have advised the frequent use of opiates. I resisted them as much as I could; and complained that it made me almost delirious. This Dr. Heberden seemed not much to heed; but I was so weary of it, that I tried, when I could not wholly omit it, to diminish the dose, in which, contrarily to
the

the known custom of the takers of opium, and beyond what it seemed reasonable to expect, I have so far succeeded, that having begun with three grains, a large quantity, I now appease the paroxysm with a quarter of an ounce of diacodium, estimated an equivalent only to half a grain; and this quantity it is now eight days since I took.

That I may send to Mrs. Lewis, for when I shall venture out I do not know, you must let me know where she may be found, which you omitted to tell me.

I hope my dear Sophy will go on recovering. But methinks Miss Thrale rather neglects me; suppose she should try to write me a little Latin letter.

Do you however write to me often, and write kindly; perhaps we may sometime see each other.

I am, Madam,

Your, &c.

if saints and sinners go after death to the same place, they may possibly see each other some time hence.

LETTER CCCXLII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

MADAM,

London, March 20, 1784.

YOUR last letter had something of tenderness. The accounts which you have had of my danger and distress were I suppose not aggravated. I have been confined ten weeks with an asthma and dropsy. But I am now better. God has in his mercy granted me a reprieve; for how much time his mercy must determine.

On the 19th of last month I evacuated twenty pints of water, and I think I reckon exactly; from that time the tumour has subsided, and I now begin to move with some freedom. You will easily believe that I am still at a great distance from health; but I am, as my surgeon expressed it, amazingly better. Heberden seems to have great hopes.

Write to me no more about *dying with a grace*; when you feel what I have felt in approaching eternity—in fear of soon hearing the
the

the sentence of which there is no revocation, you will know the folly; my wish is, that you may know it sooner. The distance between the grave and the remotest point of human longevity, is but a very little; and of that little no path is certain. You knew all this, and I thought that I knew it too; but I know it now with a new conviction. May that new conviction not be vain!

I am now cheerful; I hope this approach to recovery is a token of the Divine mercy. My friends continue their kindness. I give a dinner to-morrow.

Pray let me know how my dear Sophy goes on. I still hope that there is in her fits more terroure than danger. But I hope, however it be, that she will speedily recover. I will take care to pay Miss Susy her letter. God bless you all.

I am, Madam,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R CCCXLIII.

To Miss Susy T H R A L E.

MY DEAREST MISS SUSY, London, Mar. 25, 1784.

SINCE you are resolved to stand it out, and keep *mum* till you have heard from me, I must at last comply; and indeed compliance costs me now no trouble, but as it irritates a cough, which I got, as you might have done, by standing at an open window; and which has now harassed me many days, and is too strong for diacodium, nor has yet given much way to opium itself. However, having been so long used to so many worse things, I mind it but little. I have not bad nights; and my stomach has never failed me. But when I shall go abroad again, I know not.

With Mr. Herschel it will certainly be very right to cultivate an acquaintance; for he can show you in the sky what no man before him has ever seen, by some wonderful improvements which he has made in the telescope. What he has to show is indeed a long way off,

off, and perhaps concerns us but little; but all truth is valuable, and all knowledge is pleasing in its first effects, and may be subsequently useful. Of whatever we see we always wish to know; always congratulate ourselves when we know that of which we perceive another to be ignorant. Take therefore all opportunities of learning that offer themselves, however remote the matter may be from common life or common conversation. Look in Herschel's telescope; go into a chymist's laboratory; if you see a manufacturer at work, remark his operations. By this activity of attention, you will find in every place diversion and improvement.

Now dear Sophy is got well, what is it that ails my mistress? She complains, and complains, I am afraid, with too much cause; but I know not distinctly what is her disorder. I hope that time and a quiet mind will restore her.

*Poor little girl
but five and forty
years old! The cause
of her complaints
was love.*

I am, My dearest,

Your, &c.

LETTER CCCXLIV.

Mrs. THRALE to Dr. JOHNSON.

MY DEAR SIR,

March 27. 1784.

YOU tell one of my daughters that you know not with distinctness the cause of my complaints. I believe she who lives with me knows them no better; one very dreadful one is however removed, by dear Sophia's recovery. It is kind in you to quarrel no more about expressions which were not meant to offend; but unjust to suppose, I have not lately thought myself dying. Let us however

Piozzi was now on the road, and in a few days would be in England: therefore she prepares a breach of friendship with him, as she is sure will never approve of her marriage with such a fellow.

take the Prince of Abyssinia's advice, and not add to the other evils of life the bitterness of controversy. If courage is a noble and generous quality, let us exert it to the last, and at the last: If faith is a Christian virtue, let us willingly receive and accept that support it will most surely bestow—and do permit me to repeat those words with which I know not why you were displeased: Let us leave behind us the best example that we can.

I know not to what purpose she said those words, as she has sent the letter that contained them: but she was within three months of leaving an example to her daughters, that I hope they never will think the best.

All

All this is not written by a person in high health and happiness, but by a fellow-sufferer, who has more to endure than she can tell, or you can guess; and now let us talk of the Severn salmon, which will be coming in soon; I shall send you one of the finest, and shall be glad to hear that your appetite is good: mine has been so long vitiated, that it endures no aliment with pleasure but coffee, and those doses of Peruvian bark or cascarilla which Dobson gives me by turns, and which are become—oddly enough—delightful to my palate.

*how she devil
could he guess,
what she was in
love?*

The accounts I hear of P——'s ill state of health help to grieve me; poor man, he battled through great anxiety for two years together at least; and should the ship sink in harbour after weathering so hard a storm, who could help being sorry! All the poet's lives end just so; and though P—— has but little poet's stuff in him—*he will fall like one of the mighty* I suppose. But it is better turn one's thoughts another way; if death forbears to call till sorrow is at an end, *my* life is surely in no present danger; and P—— has two pretty boys to succeed him, die when he will.

It is very much to your credit, and more so to that of the world, that it does not forsake you: I have often heard you say, that there was very little general ingratitude to be complained of; and it is but right that the conduct of mankind towards him who says so—should confirm it.

I was among the first to offer my service on the new occasion, as I had been the last to desert it on the old one: but my own case now claims more attention than I have to bestow upon it; and though the child is safe, she is not yet well; her illness added to my own, was very difficult to bear.

You should be more willing than you are to think about air ballons. The first *failing chariot* I ever read of was in *Rasselas*; and the French seem now fully of your mechanist's mind, that only idleness and ignorance need to crawl upon the ground.

Your young correspondents would do well to write often, and obtain from you in return such letters as may benefit their minds in present, and gratify their vanity in future: I wish them to divert themselves and you by questions, which you would willingly answer;
and

DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON. 361

and beg that their negligence of such an advantage as your readiness to correspond with them, may not be charged on,

Dear Sir,

Your faithful Servant,

H. L. THRALE.

L E T T E R CCCXLV.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

London, April 15, 1784.

YESTERDAY I had the pleasure of giving another dinner to the remainder of the old club. We used to meet weekly about the year fifty, and we were as cheerful as in former times; only I could not make quite so much noise; for since the paralytick affliction, my voice is sometimes weak.

Metcalf and Crutchley, without knowing each other, are both members of parliament for Horsham in Suffex. Mr. Cator is chosen for Ipswich.

But

But a sick man's thoughts soon turn back upon himself. I am still very weak, though my appetite is keen, and my digestion potent; and I gratify myself more at table than ever I did at my own cost before. I have now an inclination to luxury which even your table did not excite; for till now my talk was more about the dishes than my thoughts. I remember you commended me for seeming pleased with my dinners when you had reduced your table; I am able to tell you with great veracity, that I never knew when the reduction began, nor should have known that it was made, had not you told me. I now think and consult to-day what I shall eat to-morrow. This disease likewise will I hope be cured. For there are other things, how different! which ought to predominate in the mind of such a man as I; but in this world the body will have its part; and my hope is, that it shall have no more. My hope but not my confidence; I have only the timidity of a Christian to determine, not the wisdom of a Stoick to secure me.

I hope all my dears are well. They should not be too nice in requiring letters. If my sweet Queeney writes more letters like her last,
when

DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON. 363

when franks come in again I will correct them
and return them.

I am, Madam,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R CCCXLVI.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM, London, April 19, 1784.

I RECEIVED in the morning your magnificent fish, and in the afternoon your apology for not sending it. I have invited the Hooles and Miss Burney to dine upon it to-morrow.

The club which has been lately instituted is at Sam's; and there was I when I was last out of the house. But the people whom I mentioned in my letter are the remnant of a little club that used to meet in Ivy Lane about three-and-thirty years ago, out of which we have lost Hawkefworth and Dyer, the rest are yet on this side the grave. Our meetings now are serious, and I think on all parts tender.

Miss

Miss Moore has written a poem called *Le Bas Bleu*; which is in my opinion a very great performance. It wanders about in manuscript, and surely will soon find its way to Bath.

I shall be glad of another letter from my dear Queeney; the former was not much to be censured. The reckoning between me and Miss Sophy is out of my head. She must write to tell me how it stands.

I am sensible of the ease that your repayment of Mr. * * * * * has given; you felt yourself *genée* by that debt; is there an English word for it?

As you do not now use your books, be pleased to let Mr. Cator know that I may borrow what I want. I think at present to take only Calmet, and the Greek Anthology. When I lay sleepless, I used to drive the night along by turning Greek epigrams into Latin.

I know not if I have not turned a hundred.

It is time to return you thanks for your present. Since I was sick, I know not if I have not had more delicacies sent me than I had ever seen till I saw your table.

It

DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON. 365

It was always Dr. Heberden's enquiry, whether my appetite for food continued. It indeed never failed me; for he considered the cessation of appetite as the despair of nature yielding up her power to the force of the disease.

I am, Madam,

Your, &c.

LETTER CCCXLVII.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

London, April 21, 1784.

I MAKE haste to send you intelligence, which, if I do not still flatter myself, you will not receive without some degree of pleasure. After a confinement of one hundred twenty-nine days, more than the third part of a year, and no inconsiderable part of human life, I this day returned thanks to God in St. Clement's church, for my recovery; a recovery, in my seventy-fifth year, from a distemper which few in the vigour of youth are known
to

to surmount; a recovery, of which neither myself, my friends, nor my physicians, had any hope; for though they flattered me with some continuance of life, they never supposed that I could cease to be dropfical. The dropsy however is quite vanished, and the asthma so much mitigated, that I walked to-day with a more easy respiration than I have known, I think, for perhaps two years past. I hope the mercy that lengthens my days, will assist me to use them well.

The Hooles, Miss Burney, and Mrs. Hull (Wesley's sister), feasted yesterday with me very cheerfully on your noble salmon. Mr. Allen could not come, and I sent him a piece, and a great tail is still left.

Dr. Brocklesby forbids the club at present, not caring to venture the chillness of the evening; but I purpose to shew myself on Saturday at the Academy's feast. I cannot publish my return to the world more effectually; for, as the Frenchman says, *tout le monde s'y trouvera*.

For this occasion I ordered some cloaths; and was told by the taylor, that when he brought me a sick dress, he never expected to
 9 make

DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON. 367

make me any thing of any other kind. My recovery is indeed wonderful.

I am, dear Madam,

Your, &c.

LETTER CCCXLVIII.

To Mrs. THRALE.

MADAM,

London, April 26, 1784.

ON Saturday I shewed myself again to the living world at the Exhibition; much and splendid was the company: but like the Doge of Genoa at Paris, I admired nothing but myself. I went up all the stairs to the pictures without stopping to rest or to breathe,

“ In all the madness of superfluous health.”

The Prince of Wales had promised to be there; but when we had waited an hour and half, sent us word that he could not come.

My cough still torments me; but it is only a cough, and much less oppressive than some of former times, but it disturbs my nights.

Mrs.

Pierri does not think so, but would object to her subscribing a great.

Mrs. Davenant called to pay me a guinea; but I gave two for you. Whatever reasons you have for frugality, it is not worth while to save a guinea a-year by withdrawing it from a public charity.

I know not whether I told you that my old friend Mrs. Cotterel, now no longer Miss, has called to see me. Mrs. Lewis is not well.

Her thoughts had been long settled, unalterably settled, on a second marriage; and the advice of gathering her children round herself, could certainly not be welcome to so hot a Bitch.

Mrs. Davenant says, that you regain your health. That you regain your health is more than a common recovery; because I infer, that you regain your peace of mind. Settle your thoughts and controul your imagination, and think no more of Hesperian felicity. Gather yourself and your children into a little system, in which each may promote the ease, the safety, and the pleasure of the rest.

Mr. Howard called on me a few days ago, and gave the new edition, much enlarged, of his Account of Prisons. He has been to survey the prisons on the continent; and in Spain he tried to penetrate the dungeons of the Inquisition, but his curiosity was very imperfectly gratified. At Madrid they shut him quite out; at Villadolid they shewed him some publick rooms.

While I am writing, the post has brought your kind letter. Do not think with dejection of your own condition; a little patience will probably give you health, it will certainly give you riches, and all the accommodations that riches can procure.

Could he dream that within two months she would be of fresh riches, as to be the most independent woman in the world?

I am, Madam,

Your, &c.

LETTER CCCXLIX.

To Mrs. THRALE.

Now I am broken loose, my friends seem willing enough to see me. On Monday I dined with Paradise; Tuesday, Hoole; Wednesday, Dr. Taylor; to-day, with Jodrel; Friday, Mrs. Garrick; Saturday, Dr. Brocklesby; next Monday, Dilly.

But I do not now drive the world about; the world drives or draws me. I am very weak; the old distress of sleeplessness comes again upon me. I have however one very

VOL. II.

Bb

strong

370 LETTERS TO AND FROM

strong basis of health, an eager appetite and strong digestion.

Queeney's letter I expected before now: Susy is likewise in debt. I believe I am in debt to Sophy, but the dear Loves ought not to be too rigorous.

Dr. Taylor has taken St. Margaret's, in Westminster, vacant by Dr. Wilson's death: how long he will keep it I cannot guess: it is of no great value, and its income consists much of voluntary contributions.

I am, Madam,

Your, &c.

London,
Thursday, May 13, 1784.

You never date fully.

L E T T E R CCCL.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM, London, May 31, 1784.

WHY you expected me to be better than I am I cannot imagine: I am better than any that saw me in my illness ever expected to

to have seen me again. I am however at a great distance from health, very weak and very asthmatick, and troubled with my old nocturnal distresses; so that I am little asleep in the night, and in the day too little awake.

I have one way or other been disappointed hitherto of that change of air, from which I think some relief may possibly be obtained; but Boswel and I have settled our resolution to go to Oxford on Thursday. But since I was at Oxford, my convivial friend Dr. Edwards and my learned friend Dr. Wheeler are both dead, and my probabilities of pleasure are very much diminished. Why, when so many are taken away, have I been yet spared! I hope that I may be fitter to die.

How long we shall stay at Oxford, or what we shall do when we leave it, neither Boszy nor I have yet settled; he is for his part resolved to remove his family to London and try his fortune at the English bar: let us all wish him success.

That will depend on his parts: but they are not great in my opinion.

Think of me, if you can, with tenderness.

I am, Madam,

Your, &c.

B b 2

LETTER CCCLI.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

London, June 17, 1784.

I RETURNED last night from Oxford after a fortnight's abode with Dr. Adams, who treated me as well as I could expect or wish; and he that contents a sick man, a man whom it is impossible to please, has surely done his part well. I went in the common vehicle with very little fatigue, and came back I think with less. My stomach continues good, and according to your advice I spare neither asparagus nor peas, and hope to do good execution upon all the summer fruits. But my nights are bad, very bad; the asthma attacks me often, and the dropy is watching an opportunity to return. I hope I have checked it, but great caution must be used, and indeed great caution is not a high price for health or ease.

What I shall do next I know not; all my schemes of rural pleasure have been some way
or

DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON. 373

or other disappointed. I have now some thought of Lichfield and Ashbourne. Let me know, dear Madam, your destination.

I am, Madam,

Your, &c.

LETTER CCCLII.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

London, June 26, 1784.

THIS morning I saw Mr. Lysons: he is an agreeable young man, and likely enough to do all that he designs. I received him as one sent by you has a right to be received, and I hope he will tell you that he was satisfied; but the initiatory conversation of two strangers is seldom pleasing or instructive to any great degree, and ours was such as other occasions of the same kind produce.

A message came to me yesterday to tell me that Macbean, after three days of illness, is dead of a suppression of urine. He was one

B b 3

of

374 LETTERS TO AND FROM

of those who, as Swift says, *stood as a screen between me and death*. He has I hope made a good exchange. He was very pious; he was very innocent; he did no ill; and of doing good a continual tenour of distress allowed him few opportunities: he was very highly esteemed in the house.

Write to me if you can some words of comfort. My dear girls seem all to forget me.

I am, Madam,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R CCCLIII.

Mrs. PIOZZI to Dr. JOHNSON.

She was not yet married when she wrote her last letter but one to Johnson. This letter of hers is falsified for the purpose of this edition, and the answer to it is a mere forgery of hers. But she shall prove in another place.

MY DEAR SIR,

Bath, June 30. 1789.

THE enclosed is a circular letter which I have sent to all the guardians, but our friendship demands somewhat more; it requires that I should beg your pardon for concealing from you a connexion which you must have heard of by many, but I suppose never

DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON. 375

never believed. Indeed, my dear Sir, it was concealed only to save us both needless pain; I could not have borne to reject that counsel it would have killed me to take, and I only tell it you now because all is irrevocably settled and out of your power to prevent. I will say however, that the dread of your disapprobation has given me some anxious moments, and though perhaps I am become by many privations the most independent woman in the world, I feel as if acting without a parent's consent till you write kindly to

Your faithful servant.

Poor tender girl! she was so truly in love!

She had five hundred a year for the maintenance of her girls: but she gave them no masters while at Bath, to maintain Puzos; at Milan: and these were the privations.

LETTER CCCLIV.

To Mrs. P I O Z Z I.

DEAR MADAM,

London, July 8, 1784.

WHAT you have done, however I may lament it, I have no pretence to resent, as it has not been injurious to me: I therefore breathe out one sigh more of tenderness, perhaps uselefs, but at least sincere,

How could Johnson have ever written such stuff?

B b 4

I wish

*How could Johnson talk
of the continuance
or no continuance of
the world? Can such
stuff be his.*

I wish that God may grant you every blessing, that you may be happy in this world for its short continuance, and eternally happy in a better state; and whatever I can contribute to your happiness I am very ready to repay, for that kindness which soothed twenty years of a life radically wretched.

*What dignity can be
the share of Piozzi's
wife either in Italy
or in England? And with
regard to her jealousy,
did he think, that
Piozzi, when tired of
her in Italy, would
get rid of her by a
murder? Is this stuff
to be attributed to
Johnson?*

Do not think slightly of the advice which I now presume to offer. Prevail upon Mr. Piozzi to settle in England: you may live here with more dignity than in Italy, and with more security: your rank will be higher, and your fortune more under your own eye. I desire not to detail all my reasons, but every argument of prudence and interest is for England, and only some phantoms of imagination seduce you to Italy.

I am afraid however that my counsel is vain, yet I have eased my heart by giving it.

*The Bitch always loved
to be compared to some
Queen, or other. But
where is here the
connection of the two
Queens compared?*

When Queen Mary took the resolution of sheltering herself in England, the Archbishop of St. Andrew's, attempting to dissuade her, attended on her journey; and when they came to the irremeable stream that separated the two kingdoms, walked by her side into the water, in the middle of which he seized her
bridle,

bridle, and with earnestness proportioned to her danger and his own affection pressed her to return. The Queen went forward.—If the parallel reaches thus far, may it go no farther.—The tears stand in my eyes.

I am going into Derbyshire, and hope to be followed by your good wishes, for I am, with great affection,

Your, &c.

Any letters that come for me hither will be sent me.

*That is: may not
some singing Queen
of Italy, jealous of
your beauty, be
induced to have
you beheaded.
Can any body ever
think that Johnson
would write such
execrable stuff?*

AFTER having finished the selection of Doctor Johnson's Letters to myself, and after having silently lamented that he who had written them would write no more;—after having passed likewise the painful task of reviewing in my own letters what Spenser so pathetically terms

Many an old sorrow, which made a new breach!

I found myself unexpectedly favoured by the good-nature of those, to whose confidence or kindness I could have formed *no* pretensions, for some variety of entertainment to the Public. In the Letters addressed to Miss Boothby they will perhaps be less struck with the Author's excellence than with that of the Lady, for whom he professes and for whom I know he felt such profound veneration. His powers of expression are already sufficiently known, but to deserve such reverence is more difficult than to express it; nor was Doctor Johnson at any period of his life inclined

Miss Boothby was perhaps the first woman entitled to the appellation of Lady, that Johnson has access to: no wonder then if he in a manner worshipped her. Mrs. Thrale was the second; and how he enabled himself to develop female characters by pointing those two Ladies, this publication plainly shows. The one was an Enthusiast, the other a vile Wretch, and poor Johnson, always lost in deep contemplations, never examined either at all.

clined to pay excessive praise where he did not think he had found uncommon merit.

A Hebrew Grammar, or the sketch of one composed for her own use, and written in a character eminently beautiful, has been preserved by her family as a specimen of her literature; and that she has been tenderly recollected by relations who were very young when she died, this elegant Epitaph, written by Brooke Boothby, Esq. may serve as an agreeable proof.

SACRED TO THE MEMORY

OF

HILL BOOTHBY,

ONLY DAUGHTER OF BROOKE BOOTHBY AND

ELIZABETH FITZHERBERT,

BORN OCT. 27, 1708, DIED JAN. 16, 1756.

Could beauty, learning, talents, virtue, save
From the dark confines of th' insatiate grave,
This frail memorial had not ask'd a tear
O'er HILL's cold relics sadly mouldering here.
Friendship's chaste flame her ardent bosom fir'd,
And bright religion's all her soul inspir'd;
Her soul, too heavenly for an house of clay,
Soon wore its earth-built fabrick to decay;
In the last struggles of departing breath
She saw her Saviour gild the bed of death;

Heard

*Almost every Lady
he knew was a
woman of uncommon
merit with him, if
they but coaxed him
which they all did:
and that was his
only criterion of
their merits or
demerits: nor would
he ever be at the
trouble of any
other. With them
he did nearly the
same. What were
the merits of Thrale
with him, but his
receiving him willingly
in his house? For
Thrale never did
any thing in his
life that deserved
much praise, or much
dispraise.*

Heard his mild accents, tun'd to peace and love,
Give glorious welcome to the realms above ;
In those bright regions, that celestial shore,
Where friends long lost shall meet to part no more ;
“ Bleft Lord, I come !” my hopes have not been
vain :

Upon her lifeless cheek extatic smiles remain.

The sincerity and fervour of this lady's piety drove her, as her best friends acknowledge, to enthusiasm, and those people of course obtained most of her confidence who professed superior warmth of devotion, or affected peculiar sanctity of manners. But if it is weakness to be imposed on by hypocrisy in others, let those only claim a right to ridicule such weakness who have never been duped by it themselves; who deaf to all suggestions of indolence, avarice, or amorous passion, have never been lulled to the loss of fame by any interested promoters of an idle life, or stimulated to the ruin of an affluent fortune by projectors, who promised to swell it into an enormous one.

Among these enviable heroes of impregnable caution our Doctor never did pretend to rank himself; his publick writings, private letters,

letters, and secret meditations, alike confess that he passed many hours in imposing upon himself, and many more in self-condemnation, for having suffered himself to have been so imposed upon. Every acquaintance possesses some anecdote, confirming his earnest desire and daily resolution to attain by diligence that christian perfection which flies from human approach, and escapes the grasp even of the wise and good; like the Deity in Homer that calls from the cloud, and checks the warrior who wishes to pierce it, in words translated thus by Mr. Pope:

Oh, son of Tydeus, cease; be wise and see
How vast the difference 'twixt the gods and thee!

That immeasurable distance was indeed I think scarce ever more discernible than when he quarrelled with his truest friend Dr. Taylor of Ashbourne, for recommending to him a degree of temperance, by which alone his life could have been saved, and recommending it in his own unaltered phrase too, with praise-worthy intentions to impress it more forcibly.

This quarrel however, if quarrel it might be called, which was mere fullness on one side and sorrow on the other, soon healed of it-

self, mutual reproaches having never been permitted to widen the breach, and supply; as is the common practice among coarser disputants, the original and perhaps almost forgotten cause of dispute.

After some weeks, Johnson sent to request the sight of his old companion, whose feeble health *beld him away* for some weeks more, and who when he came, urged that feebleness as an excuse for appearing no sooner at the call of friendship in distress; but Johnson, who was then, as he expressed it, not sick but dying, told him a story of a lady, who many years before lay expiring in such tortures as that cruel disease a cancer naturally produces; and begged the conversation of her earliest intimate to soothe the incredible sufferings of her body, and relieve the approaching terrors of her mind: but what was the friend's apology for absence? "Oh, my dear," said she, "I have really been so plagued and so pained
"of late by a nasty *whitlow*, that indeed it
"was quite impossible for me till to-day to
"attend my Lucy's call." I think this was not more than two days before his dissolution.

Some Lichfield friends fancied that he had half a mind to die where he was born, but
that

that the hope of being buried in Westminster Abbey overpowered the inclination ; but Mr. Johnson loved London, and many people then in London, whom I doubt not he sincerely wished to see again, particularly Mr. Saftres, for whose person some of the following letters manifest a strong affection, and of whose talents I have often heard him speak with great esteem. That gentleman has told me, that his fears of death ended with his hope of recovery, and that the latter days of his life passed in calm resignation to God's will, and a firm trust in his mercy.

He burned many letters in the last week I am told, and those written by his mother drew from him a flood of tears, when the paper they were written on was all consumed. Mr. Saftres saw him cast a melancholy look upon their ashes, which he took up and examined, to see if a word was still legible. Nobody has ever mentioned what became of Miss Aston's letters, though he once told me himself, they should be the last papers he would destroy, and added these lines with a very faltering voice:

Then

Then from his closing eye thy form shall part,
And the last pang shall tear thee from his heart;
Life's idle bus'ness at one gasp be o'er,
The Muse forgot, and thou belov'd no more.

The high opinion he had formed, and the prodigious value he always retained for his wife, is preserved in a funeral sermon, written on her death, of which it is no more than bare justice to aver, that Père Bourdaloûe has done nothing finer. Sublimity and tenderness mingle in his praises, religion and morality inspire every precept, and produce from the extinction even of a common life, marked as I am told by no superiority during its continuance, inferences, of power at once to animate the coldest in the pursuit of perfection, and to restrain the most petulant from arrogance of ill-founded hope.

That such a desirable publication has been hitherto with-held from the press, we owe to Dr. Taylor's scrupulous delicacy. When Mrs. Johnson died, her husband requested him to compose her *Oraison Funèbre*, which the friend refused upon this honourable principle, that he would not commend a character he little esteemed. Doctor Johnson then sat down, and composed the sermon I have read ; and

This cannot be true, as Johnson knew, that poor Taylor could not do it; nay, in the earlier part of Taylor's life, Johnson wrote many sermons for Taylor's use, that Taylor paid two guineas a piece.

Could she not say Funeral oration, or Funeral Sermon? But she will let us know what she knows French

and begged Taylor to preach it if he would do nothing more; but even this he objected to, for the reason he had already given, and provoked the writer to tear the manuscript, which was carefully put together again and copied fair, but which the Doctor still persists to with-hold from publication, because he thinks the person undeserving of the panegyrick it contains.

To what good purpose does the Bitch use to ill Johnson's poor wife so many years after she had died? Because the Bitch is but a Bitch.

I have the honour to print in this collection a letter of gallantry, addressed to another lady, who desires that her name may remain concealed, though few people except herself, who had as much pretension to be praised, would have had modesty enough to retire from being known. These obliging contributors have indeed forced me once more to obtrude myself upon the publick, and to talk with a tired tongue upon a half-forgotten topick; as among the freezing echoes of Nova Zembla it is said, that we may hear in the following winter some scraps of that conversation which engaged us a twelve-month before. Had much of this been omitted, I had certainly left less for criticks to censure, or for friends to forgive: the pub-

The lady is Miss, now Mrs. Cottrell, with whom I brought him acquainted.

what a flaming comparison! She always made efforts after comparisons.

*This is a prolix
aimed at Miss Thrale
who refused to give up
her letters from Johnson,
as she saw the
impropriety of the
whole publication, which
was only the produce
of her and her odious
Jenny's avarice.*

lick however has been still indulgent, though
individuals have been spiteful, and

Non nimium curo; nam cœnæ fercula nostræ
Malim convivis quam placuisse cocis.

Doct^r Johnson was no complainer of ill
usage: I never heard him even lament the
disregard shewn to Irene, which however was
a violent favourite with him, and much was
he offended when having asked me once,
“ what single scene afforded me most pleasure
of all our tragick drama;” I, little thinking of
his play's existence, named, perhaps with hasty
impropriety, “ the dialogue between Syphax
and Juba, in Addison's Cato.” Nay, nay, re-
plied he, if you are for declamation, I hope
my two ladies have the better of them all.
This piece however lay dormant many years,
shelved (in the manager's phrase) from the
time Mr. Peter Garrick presented it first on
Fleetwood's table, to the hour when his bro-
ther David obtained due influence on the
theatre, on which it crawled through nine
nights, *supported by cordials*, but never ob-
taining popular applause. I asked him then
to name a better scene; he pitched on that

between Horatio and Lothario, in Rowe's Fair Penitent; but Mr. Murphy shewed him afterwards that it was borrowed from Maffinger, and had not the merit of originality.

It is well known that Johnson despised the profession of an actor: when Garrick was talked of as candidate for admission into the Literary Club many years ago,—If he does apply, says our Doctor to Mr. Thrall, I'll black-ball him. "Who, Sir? Mr. Garrick, your friend, your companion,—black-ball him!" Why, Sir, I love my little David dearly, better than all or any of his flatterers do, but surely one ought to fit in a society like ours

The Bird ought not to have written this paragraph, that only tells us of an idle jargon of Johnson, who, if he ever used it, in a fit of good-humour rather than of malice.

Unelbow'd by a gamester, pimp, or play'r.

In spite of this ill-founded contempt, he persuaded himself to treat Mrs. Siddons with great politeness, and said when she called on him at Bolt-court, and Frank could not immediately provide her with a chair, "You see, Madam, wherever you go there are no seats to be got." Johnson's readiness was indeed conspicuous above all his other un-

he did not want his own or any other body's persuasion, as in reality he would often say polite things of the players, but loved and respected any merit they had, neither more, nor less, than other folks.

common powers. I asked him one day, why the Idlers were published without mottoes? he replied, that it was forborne the better to conceal himself and escape discovery: But let us think of some now, said he, for the next edition; we can fit the two volumes in two hours, can't we? Accordingly he recollected, and I wrote down these following, till some friend coming in, in about five minutes, put an end to our further progress on the subject, nor did I ever again see the card they were written on till two or three weeks ago.

Johnson, I am sure, never would have given so absurd a reason for forbearing mottoes, as mottoes cannot either cover or discover.

Motto for the paper of the Bracelet. No. 39.

*Nec genus ornatus unum, quod quamque decebit
Eligat.* OVID. Ars Amat. 3. 135.

For the Anatomical Novices. No. 17.

Surge tandem Carnifex.

MECÆNAS TO AUGUSTUS.

For No. 88.

Hodie quid egisti?

For the paper about the Debtors. No. 22.

*Ob nomen dulce libertatis! Ob jus eximium nostræ
civitatis!* CICERO.

For

DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON. 389

For Tim Ranger's Letters. No. 62. 64.

Quid faciam? præscribe.

Quiescas.

HOR.

For Omar the Prudent. No. 101.

Carpe bilaris—fuget heu! non revocanda dies.

For Hacho, King of Lapland. No. 96.

Qui se volet esse potentem,

Animos domet ille feroces:

Nec victa libidine colla,

Fædis submittat habenis. BOETHIUS.

For Dick Shifter. No. 71.

Celan le selve angui, leoni, ed orgi

Dentro il lor verde.

AMINTA del TASSO.

For Molly Quick. No. 46.

Fugit ad salices, sed se cupit ante videri. VIRG.

And now what remains? after having reviewed the letters of a dead friend, whose lips while living breathed sentences of instruction, surpassed by those of no *un*-inspired teacher, and whose writings called in elegance to adorn, and erudition to engrave those pre-

cepts; whose life passed in the practice of refined morality, ending in a death which attested the purest faith; what remains but to reflect, that by that death no part of Johnson perished which had power by form to recommend his real excellence; nothing that did not disgrace the soul which it contained: like some fine statue, the boast of Greece and Rome, plastered up into deformity, while casts are preparing from it to improve students, and diffuse the knowledge of its merit; but dazzling only with complete perfection, when the gross and awkward covering is removed.

*Damn her far-fetched
and ill expressed
comparisons!*

*how do statues
dazzle?*

LETTER CCCLV.

Dr. JOHNSON to Miss BOOTHBY.

DEAREST MADAM,

January 1, 1755.

THOUGH I am afraid your illness leaves you little leisure for the reception of airy civilities, yet I cannot forbear to pay you my congratulations on the new year; and to declare my wishes, that your years to come may be many and happy. In this wish indeed I include myself, who have none but you on whom my heart reposes; yet surely I wish your good, even though your situation were such as should permit you to communicate no gratifications to,

Dearest, dearest Madam,

Your, &c.

LETTER CCCLVI.

To the Same,

DEAREST MADAM,

Jan. 3, 1755.

NOBODY but you can recompense me for the distress which I suffered on Monday night. Having engaged Dr. Lawrence to let me know, at whatever hour, the state in which he left you; I concluded when he staid so long, that he staid to see my dearest expire. I was composing myself as I could to hear what yet I hoped not to hear, when his servant brought me word that you were better. Do you continue to grow better? Let my dear little Miss inform me on a card. I would not have you write lest it should hurt you, and consequently hurt likewise,

Dearest Madam,

Your, &c.

LETTER CCCLVII.

To the Same.

DEAR MADAM,

Dec. 30, 1755.

IT is again midnight, and I am again alone. With what meditation shall I amuse this waste hour of darkness and vacuity? If I turn my thoughts upon myself, what do I perceive but a poor helpless being, reduced by a blast of wind to weakness and misery? How my present distemper was brought upon me I can give no account, but impute it to some sudden succession of cold to heat; such as in the common road of life cannot be avoided, and against which no precaution can be taken.

Of the fallaciousness of hope, and the uncertainty of schemes, every day gives some new proof; but it is seldom heeded, till something rather felt than seen, awakens attention. This illness, in which I have suffered something and feared much more, has depressed my confidence and elation; and made me consider all that I have promised myself, as less certain

certain to be attained or enjoyed. I have endeavoured to form resolutions of a better life; but I form them weakly, under the consciousness of an external motive. Not that I conceive a time of sickness a time improper for recollection and good purposes, which I believe diseases and calamities often sent to produce, but because no man can know how little his performance will answer to his promises; and designs are nothing in human eyes till they are realised by execution.

Continue, my Dearest, your prayers for me, that no good resolution may be vain. You think, I believe, better of me than I deserve. I hope to be in time what I wish to be; and what I have hitherto satisfied myself too readily with only wishing.

Your billet brought me what I much wished to have, a proof that I am still remembered by you at the hour in which I most desire it!

The Doctor is anxious about you. He thinks you too negligent of yourself; if you will promise to be cautious, I will exchange promises, as we have already exchanged injunctions. However, do not write to me more than you can easily bear; do not interrupt your ease to write at all.

Mr.

Mr. Fitzherbert sent to-day to offer me some wine; the people about me say I ought to accept it, I shall therefore be obliged to him if he will send me a bottle.

There has gone about a report that I died to-day, which I mention, lest you should hear it and be alarmed. You see that I think my death may alarm you; which for me is to think very highly of earthly friendship. I believe it arose from the death of one of my neighbours. You know Des Cartes's argument, "I think, therefore I am." It is as good a consequence, "I write, therefore I am alive." I might give another, "I am alive, therefore I love Miss Boothby;" but that I hope our friendship may be of far longer duration than life.

I am, dearest Madam,

with sincere affection,

Your, &c.

*Had she lived
some years longer,
Johnson would in
all probability have
become quite an
Enthusiast in point
of Religion, and
gone mad with it.
He was so strongly
inclined to it.*

LETTER CCCLVIII.

To the Same.

MY SWEET ANGEL,

Dec. 31.

I HAVE read your book, I am afraid you will think without any great improvement; whether you can read my notes I know not. You ought not to be offended; I am perhaps as sincere as the writer, In all things that terminate here I shall be much guided by your influence, and should take or leave by your direction; but I cannot receive my religion from any human hand. I desire however to be instructed, and am far from thinking myself perfect.

*He would have
certainly taken it
from her without
ever suspecting he did.*

I beg you to return the book when you have looked into it. I should not have written what is in the margin, had I not had it from you, or had I not intended to shew it you.

It affords me a new conviction, that in these books there is little new, except new forms of expression; which may be sometimes taken, even by the writer, for new doctrines.

I fin-

I sincerely hope that God, whom you so much desire to serve aright, will bless you, and restore you to health, if he sees it best. Surely no human understanding can pray for any thing temporal otherwise than conditionally. Dear Angel, do not forget me. My heart is full of tenderness.

It has pleased God to permit me to be much better ; which I believe will please you.

Give me leave, who have thought much on medicine, to propose to you an easy, and I think a very probable remedy for indigestion and lubricity of the bowels. Dr. Lawrence has told me your case. Take an ounce of dried orange-peel finely powdered, divide it into scruples, and take one scruple at a time in any manner ; the best way is perhaps to drink it in a glass of hot red port, or to eat it first and drink the wine after it. If you mix cinnamon or nutmeg with the powder, it were not worse ; but it will be more bulky, and so more troublesome. This is a medicine not disgusting, not costly, easily tried, and if not found useful, easily left off.

I would not have you offer it to the Doctor as mine. Physicians do not love intruders ;
yet

yet do not take it without his leave. But do not be easily put off, for it is in my opinion very likely to help you, and not likely to do you harm; do not take too much in haste; a scruple once in three hours, or about five scruples a-day, will be sufficient to begin, or less, if you find any aversion. I think using sugar with it might be bad; if syrup, use old syrup of quinces: but even that I do not like. I should think better of conserve of floes. Has the Doctor mentioned the bark? in powder you could hardly take it; perhaps you might take the infusion.

Do not think me troublesome, I am full of care. I love you and honour you; and am very unwilling to lose you.

*The true phrase is, A Dieu je vous recommande.
Je vous recommande
à Dieu.*

I am, Madam,

Your, &c.

My compliments to my dear Miss.

LETTER CCCLIX.

To the Same.

DEAREST DEAR,

Saturday.

I AM extremely obliged to you for the kindness of your enquiry. After I had written to you, Dr. Lawrence came, and would have given some oil and sugar, but I took Rhenish and water, and recovered my voice. I yet cough much, and sleep ill. I have been visited by another Doctor to-day; but I laughed at his Balsam of Peru. I fasted on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, and felt neither hunger nor faintness. I have dined yesterday and to-day, and found little refreshment. I am not much amiss; but can no more sleep than if my dearest lady were angry at,

Madam,

Your, &c.

398 LETTERS TO AND FROM

yet do not take it without his leave. But do not be easily put off, for it is in my opinion very likely to help you, and not likely to do you harm; do not take too much in haste; a scruple once in three hours, or about five scruples a-day, will be sufficient to begin, or less, if you find any aversion. I think using sugar with it might be bad; if syrup, use old syrup of quinces: but even that I do not like. I should think better of conserve of floes. Has the Doctor mentioned the bark? in powder you could hardly take it; perhaps you might take the infusion.

Do not think me troublesome, I am full of care. I love you and honour you; and am very unwilling to lose you.

*The true phrase is, A Dieu je vous recommande.
Je vous recommande
à Dieu.*

I am, Madam,

Your, &c.

My compliments to my dear Miss.

LETTER CCCLIX.

To the Same.

DEAREST DEAR,

Saturday.

I AM extremely obliged to you for the kindness of your enquiry. After I had written to you, Dr. Lawrence came, and would have given some oil and sugar, but I took Rhenish and water, and recovered my voice. I yet cough much, and sleep ill. I have been visited by another Doctor to-day; but I laughed at his Balsam of Peru. I fasted on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, and felt neither hunger nor faintness. I have dined yesterday and to-day, and found little refreshment. I am not much amiss; but can no more sleep than if my dearest lady were angry at,

Madam,

Your, &c.

LETTER CCCLX.

To the Same.

HONOURED MADAM, January 8, 1756.

I BEG of you to endeavour to live. I have returned your *Law*, which however I earnestly entreat you to give me. I am in great trouble; if you can write three words to me, be pleased to do it. I am afraid to say much, and cannot say nothing when my dearest is in danger.

The all-merciful GOD have mercy on you.

I am, Madam,

Your, &c.

LETTER CCCLXI.

Dr. JOHNSON to Miss [^]Connerel. * * * * *

MADAM,

July 19, 1755.

I KNOW not how liberally your generosity would reward those who should do you any service, when you can so kindly acknowledge

ledge a favour which I intended only to myself. That accidentally hearing that you were in town, I made haste to enjoy an interval of pleasure which I found would be short, was the natural consequence of that self-love which is always busy in quest of happiness; of that happiness which we often miss when we think it near, and sometimes find when we imagine it lost. When I had missed you, I went away disappointed; and did not know that my vexation would be so amply repaid by so kind a letter. A letter indeed can but imperfectly supply the place of its writer, at least of such a writer as you; and a letter which makes me still more desire your presence, is but a weak consolation under the necessity of living longer without you; with this however I must be for a time content, as much content at least as discontent will suffer me; for Mr. Baretti being a single being in this part of the world, and entirely clear from all engagements, takes the advantage of his independence, and will come before me; for which if I could blame him, I should punish him; but my own heart tells me, that he only does to me, what, if I could, I should do to him.

I hope Mrs. ^{Porter,} —, when she came to her favourite place, found her house dry, and her
 VOL. II. D d woods

Mrs. Porter had been a celebrated actress: yet Johnson esteemed her much, whatever Mrs. Piozzi may inform of his contempt for theatrical folks. Mrs. Porter lived at High-wood-ill.

woods growing, and the breeze whistling, and the birds singing, and her own heart dancing. And for you, Madam, whose heart cannot yet dance to such musick, I know not what to hope; indeed I could hope every thing that would please you, except that perhaps the absence of higher pleasures is necessary to keep some little place vacant in your remembrance for,

Madam,

Your, &c.

LETTER CCCLXII.

Dr. JOHNSON to J—— S—— Esq.

DEAR SIR,

COMMUNICATE your letters regularly. Your father's inexorability not only grieves but amazes me. He is your father. He was always accounted a wise man; nor do I remember any thing to the disadvantage of his good nature; but in his refusal to assist you, there is neither good nature, fatherhood, nor wisdom.

It

It is the practice of good nature to overlook faults, which have already by the consequence punished the delinquent. It is natural for a father to think more favourably than others of children; and it is always wise to give assistance, while a little help will prevent the necessity of greater. If you married imprudently, you married at your own hazard, at an age when you had a right of choice. It would be hard if the man might not chuse his own wife who has a right to plead before the judges of his country.

If your imprudence has ended in difficulties and inconveniences, you are yourself to support them; and with the help of a little better health you would support them, and conquer them.

Surely that want which accident and sickness produce is to be supported in every region of humanity, though there were neither friends nor fathers in the world. You have certainly from your father the highest claim of charity, though none of right; and therefore I would counsel you, to omit no decent nor manly degree of importunity.

Your debts in the whole are not large; and of the *whole*, but a small part is troublesome.

Small debts are like small shot; they are rattling on every side, and can scarcely be escaped without a wound. Great debts are like cannon of loud noise but little danger; you must therefore be enabled to discharge petty demands, that you may have leisure with security to struggle with the rest. Neither the great nor little debts disgrace you. I am sure you have my esteem, for the courage with which you contracted them, and the spirit with which you endure them. I wish my esteem could be of more use.

I have been invited, or have invited myself, to several parts of the kingdom; and will not incommode my dear Lucy, by coming to Lichfield while her present lodging is of any use to her. I hope in a few days to be at leisure, and to make visits. Whither I shall fly is matter of no importance; a man unconnected is at home every where, unless he may be said to be at home no where. I am sorry, dear Sir, that where you have parents, a man of your merits should not have a home. I wish I could give it you.

I am, Dear Sir,

Affectionately your's.

L E T T E R CCCLXIII.

DR. JOHNSON to Mr. SASTRES.

DEAR SIR,

Ashbourne, August 21, 1784.

I AM glad that a letter has at last reached you; what became of the two former, which were directed to *Mortimer* instead of *Margaret* Street, I have no means of knowing, nor is it worth the while to enquire; they neither enclosed bills, nor contained secrets.

My health was for some time quite at a stand, if it did not rather go backwards; but for a week past it flatters me with appearances of amendment, which I dare yet hardly credit. My breath has been certainly less obstructed for eight days; and yesterday the water seemed to be disposed to a fuller flow. But I get very little sleep; and my legs do not like to carry me.

You were kind in paying my forfeits at the club; it cannot be expected that many should

D d 3

meet

meet in the summer, however they that continue in town should keep up appearances as well as they can. I hope to be again among you.

I wish you had told me distinctly the mistakes in the French words. The French is but a secondary and subordinate part of your design; exactness, however, in all parts is necessary, though complete exactness cannot be attained; and the French are so well stocked with dictionaries, that a little attention may easily keep you safe from gross faults; and as you work on, your vigilance will be quickened, and your observation regulated; you will better know your own wants, and learn better whence they may be supplied. Let me know minutely the whole state of your negotiations. Dictionaries are like watches, the worst is better than none, and the best cannot be expected to go quite true.

The weather here is very strange summer weather; and we are here two degrees nearer the north than you. I was I think loath to think a fire necessary in July, till I found one in the servants hall, and thought myself entitled to as much warmth as them,

I wish

DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON. 407

I wish you would make it a task to yourself to write to me twice a week; a letter is a great relief to,

Dear Sir,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R CCCLXIV.

To the Same.

DEAR SIR,

Ashbourne, Sept. 2, 1784.

YOUR critick seems to me to be an exquisite Frenchman; his remarks are nice; they would at least have escaped me. I wish you better luck with your next specimen; though if such slips as these are to condemn a dictionary, I know not when a dictionary will be made. I cannot yet think that *gourmander* is wrong; but I have here no means of verifying my opinion.

My health, by the mercy of God, still improves; and I have hope of standing the English winter, and of seeing you, and reading Petrarch at Bolt-court; but let me not flatter

D d 4

myself

myself too much. I am yet weak, but stronger than I was.

I suppose the club is now almost forsaken; but we shall I hope meet again. We have lost poor Allen; a very worthy man, and to me a very kind and officious neighbour.

Of the pieces ascribed by Bembo to Virgil, the *Dirce* (ascribed I think to Valerius Cato), the *Copa* and the *Moretum* are, together with the *Culex* and *Ceiris*, in Scaliger's *Appendix ad Virgilium*. The rest I never heard the name of before.

I am highly pleased with your account of the gentleman and lady with whom you lodge; such characters have sufficient attractions to draw me towards them; you are lucky to light upon them in the casual commerce of life.

Continue, dear Sir, to write to me; and let me hear any thing or nothing, as the chance of the day may be.

I am, Sir,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R CCCLXV.

To the Same.

DEAR SIR,

Ashbourne, Sept. 16, 1784.

WHAT you have told me of your landlord and his lady at Brompton, has made them such favourites, that I am not sorry to hear how you are turned out of your lodgings, because the good is greater to them than the evil is to you.

The death of dear Mr. Allen gave me pain. When after some time of absence I visit a town, I find my friends dead; when I leave a place, I am followed with intelligence, that the friend whom I hope to meet at my return is swallowed in the grave. This is a gloomy scene; but let us learn from it to prepare for our own removal. Allen is gone; Sastres and Johnson are hastening after him; may we be both as well prepared!

I again wish your next specimen success. *Paymistress* can hardly be said without a preface, (it may be expressed by a word perhaps not in use, Pay mistress).

410 LETTERS TO AND FROM

The club is, it seems, totally deserted; but as the forfeits go on, the house does not suffer; and all clubs I suppose are unattended in the summer. We shall I hope meet in winter, and be cheerful.

After this week, do not write to me till you hear again from me, for I know not well where I shall be; I have grown weary of the solitude of this place, and think of removal.

I am, Sir,

Your, &c.

LETTER CCCLXVI.

To the Same.

SIR,

Lichfield, October 20, 1784.

YOU have abundance of naughty tricks; is this your way of writing to a poor sick friend twice a week? Post comes after post, and brings no letter from Mr. Saftres. If you know any thing, write and tell it; if you know nothing, write and say that you know nothing.

What

DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON. 411

What comes of the specimen? If the book-fellers want a specimen, in which a keen critic can spy no faults, they must wait for another generation. Had not the Crusca faults? Did not the Academicians of France commit many faults? It is enough that a dictionary is better than others of the same kind. A perfect performance of any kind is not to be expected, and certainly not a perfect dictionary.

Mrs. Desmoulines never writes, and I know not how things go on at home; tell me, dear Sir, what you can.

If Mr. Seward be in town tell me his direction, for I ought to write to him.

I am very weak, and have bad nights.

I am, dear Sir,

Your, &c.

LETTER CCCLXVII.

To the Same.

DEAR SIR,

Lichfield, Nov. 1, 1784.

I BEG you to continue the frequency of your letters; every letter is a cordial; but you must not wonder that I do not answer with exact punctuality. You may always have something to tell: you live among the various orders of mankind, and may make a letter from the exploits, sometimes of the philosopher, and sometimes of the pickpocket. You see some ballons succeed and some miscarry, and a thousand strange and a thousand foolish things. But I see nothing; I must make my letter from what I feel, and what I feel with so little delight, that I cannot love to talk of it.

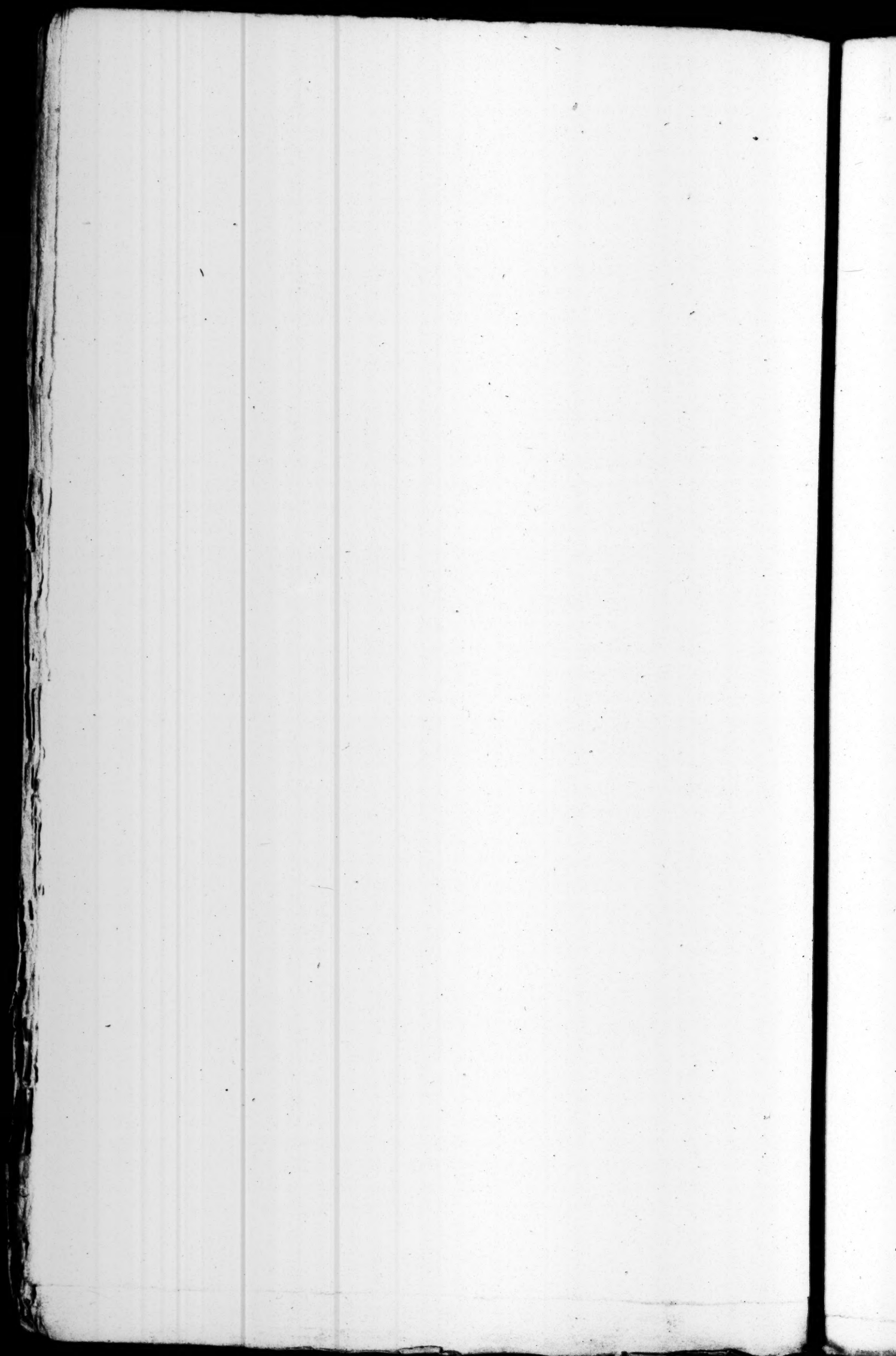
I am certainly not to come to town, but do not omit to write; for I know not when I shall come, and the loss of a letter is not much.

I am, dear Sir,

Your, &c.

END OF THE LETTERS.

P O E M S.



P O E M S.

VERSES addressed to Dr. LAWRENCE,
composed by Dr. JOHNSON, as he lay
confined with an inflamed Eye.

*S*ANGUINE dum tumido suffusus flagrat ocellus,
Deliciasque fugit solitas solitosque labores;
Damnatus tenebris, lætoque affixus inertī,
Quid mecum peragam, quod tu doctissime posses
Laurenti saltem facili, dignarier aure?
Humanæ mentis, rerum se pascere formis,
Est proprium, et quavis captare indagine verum,
Omnibus unus amor, non est modus unus amoris.
Sunt, qui curriculo timidi versantur in arcto,
Quos soli ducunt sensus, solus docet usus;
Qui sibi sat sapiunt, contenti noscere quantum
Vel digiti tractant, oculus vel sentit et auris:
Tantundem est illis, repleat spatia ardua cæli
Materia, vastum an late pandatur inane.
Scire vices ponti facile est, nihil amplius optant
Nec quærunt quid luna tuo cum fluctibus orbi.
Sic sibi diffusi, lenta experientia cursum
Qua sulcat, reptant tuti per lubrica vitæ.

*I think these
verses might
as well have
been suppressed,
as not very
worthy of Johnson.*

Altera

*Altera pars hominum, sanctæ rationis alumni
 Permissum credit, nudas sibi sistere causas;
 Materiemque rudem, magnæque parentis adesse
 Conciliis, verique sacros recludere fontes.
 Gens illa, impatiens per singula quæque vagandi
 Tentat iter brevius, magno conamine summam
 Naturæ invadens, mundique elementa refingens
 Lævia ferratis miscens, quadrata rotundis,
 Corpora cuncta suis gestit variare figuris.
 Particulasque locans certas certo ordine, pulchram
 Campagem edificat, cælorum atque ætheris ignes.
 Accendit, rerumque modos ac fœdera ponit.
 Hi sunt, quos animi generosa insania magni
 In sublime rapit, queis terra et pontus et aer
 Sub pedibus subiecta jacent; queis ultima primis
 Nexa patent; hi sunt quos nil mirabile turbat
 Nil movet insolitum, sub legibus omnia fœtis
 Dum statuunt, causisque audent prefigere metam.*

*What is Campagem?
 what is edificat? The
 poor woman could not
 copy correctly a poor
 bit of Latin.*

TRANSLATION of the foregoing VERSES.

By Mrs. Piozzi.

CONDEMN'D to shun bright Sol's reviving ray,
 While my tir'd sight shrinks at th' approach of
 day,
 Each pleasing task become my present dread,
 Chain'd down by darkness to a lazy bed;

What

What happy periods, worthy of thy care,
 'Oh learned Lawrence! can thy friend prepare!
 'Mong shadowy forms the phantom Truth to find,
 Is still the hope of ev'ry human mind,
 Inclined by passion all, but variously inclin'd.

Some roll their timid wheel at small expence,
 O'er the known track of Custom and of Sense,
 Depending on their touch, their taste, their eyes,
 Newton alike and Berkeley they despise:
 Careless through empty space though planets roll,
 Or clust'ring atoms fill the crowded whole;
 Such souls unmov'd can Ocean's wastes survey,
 Nor ask what influence its tides obey:
 Contented creep in cold Experience' train,
 Lurk in the furrow, and neglect the grain.

Others, all glowing with Promethean fire,
 Strain their strong pow'rs to search and to enquire;
 Hunt parent Nature to her last recess,
 Force her retreats, and rend her sacred dress;
 The source of Truth impatient to pursue,
 Her winding paths they scorn, cut out a new,
 Form fancy'd scenes of elemental strife,
 Exalt material beings into life,
 Find neither square, nor round, nor rough amiss;
 All bend before the warm hypothesis;
 Till tortur'd Nature feigning to obey,
 Her fires they light, her coruscations play,
 Build airy fabricks in th' offended sky,
 And term the bold attempt—Discovery.

Such souls sublime see earth, and air, and light,
Stretch'd at their feet, nor wonder at the sight;
No knot perplexes, and no labour tires,
While thirst of knowledge urges and inspires;
For Destiny still faithful to his charge,
Conjecture only leaves to rove at large.

TRANSLATIONS from BOETHIUS
DE CONSOLATIONE PHILOSOPHIÆ.

Book II. Metre 2.

THOUGH countless as the grains of sand
That roll at Eurus' loud command;
Though countless as the lamps of night
That glad us with vicarious light;
Fair Plenty, gracious queen, shou'd pour
The blessings of a golden show'r,
Not all the gifts of Fate combin'd
Would ease the hunger of the mind,
But swallowing all the mighty store,
Rapacity would call for more;
For still where wishes most abound
Unquench'd the thirst of gain is found;
In vain the shining gifts are sent,
For none are rich without content.

Book II. Metre 4.

WOULDST thou to some stedfast seat,
Out of Fortune's pow'r retreat?
Wouldst thou, when fierce Eurus blows,
Calmly rest in safe repose?
Wouldst thou see the foaming main,
Tossing rave, but rave in vain?
Shun the mountain's airy brow,
Shun the sea-sapp'd sand below;
Soon th' aspiring fabrick falls,
When loud Auster shakes her walls,
Soon the treach'rous sands retreat,
From beneath the cumb'rous weight.
Fix not where the tempting height
Mingles danger with delight;
Safe upon the rocky ground,
Firm and low thy mansion found;
There, 'mid tempests loudest roars,
Dashing waves and shatter'd shores,
Thou shalt sit and smile to see
All the world afraid but thee,
Lead a long and peaceful age,
And deride their utmost rage.

Book III. Metre 1.

By Dr. JOHNSON and Mrs. PIOZZI*.

THE prudent hind, intent on gain,
 Must clear the ground to sow the grain,
 And Ceres' richest gifts abound,
 Where late the rankest weeds were found;
 To him whom painful tastes annoy,
 Sweet honey yields a double joy;
 The tempest gives the calm delight,
 The morning owes her charms to night;
 And thus the mind tormented long
 With wild vicissitudes of wrong,
 Contemns at length the treach'rous toys,
 And real happiness enjoys.

Book III. Metre 3.

By Dr. JOHNSON and Mrs. PIOZZI.

THROUGH Gripus' grounds let rich Pactolus
 roll,
 No golden sands can satisfy his soul;
 Though chains of pearl bow down his pensive head,
 Though a whole hecatomb his acres tread,
 No wealth his life from weary care can save,
 No care his wealth can carry to the grave.

* The lines printed in *Italics* were written by Mrs. Piozzi.

Book III. Metre 4.

By Dr. JOHNSON and Mrs. Piozzi.

VAINLY the Tyrian purple bright,
Vainly the pearl's pellucid white,
 The tyrant Nero strove t' adorn,
 Who liv'd our hatred and our scorn;
 His choice our sacred seats disgrac'd,
 His conduct human kind debas'd:
 If such on earth can bliss bestow,
 Say, what is happiness below?

Book III. Metre 5.

By Dr. JOHNSON.

THE man who pants for ample sway,
 Must bid his passions all obey;
 Must bid each wild desire be still,
 Nor yoke his reason with his will:
 For though beneath thy haughty brow
 Warm India's supple sons should bow,
 Though northern climes confess thy sway,
 Which erst in frost and freedom lay,
 If Sorrow pine or Avarice crave,
 Bow down and own thyself a slave.

Book III. Metre 6.

By Dr. JOHNSON and Mrs. PIOZZI.

I.

ALL men, throughout the peopled earth,
From one sublime beginning spring;
All from one source derive their birth,
The same their parent and their king.

II.

*At his command proud Titan glows,
And Luna lifts her horn on high;
His hand this earth on man bestows,
And strews with stars the spangled sky.*

III.

From her high seats he drew the soul,
And in this earthly cage confin'd;
To wond'ring worlds produc'd the whole,
Essence divine with matter join'd.

IV.

*Since then alike all men derive
From God himself their noble race,
Why should the witless mortals strive
For vulgar ancestry and place?*

V.

Why boast their birth before his eyes,
Who holds no human creature mean;
Save him whose soul enslav'd to Vice,
Deserts her nobler origin?

Book III. Metre 12.

By Dr. JOHNSON and Mrs. PIOZZI.

HAPPY he, whose eyes have view'd
 The transparent Fount of Good;
 Happy whose unfetter'd mind
 Leaves the load of earth behind.
 Though when Orpheus made his moan
 For his lovely consort gone,
 Though the hind approach'd to hear
 Where the lions stood near,
 And attentive to the sound
 Hares forgot the following hound,
 Round him danc'd the list'ning woods,
 Silent wonder stopt the floods,
 Grief and madness unexpress'd,
 Rag'd within the master's breast,
 While t' assuage the pangs of love,
 Verse and musick vainly strove;
 Now he sighs to Heav'n, and now
 Rushes on the realms below.
There he breath'd his am'rous fire,
There he touch'd his trembling lyre,
Warbling there his softer sorrows,
From his parent muse he borrows
Notes to touch each tender feeling,
Numbers to each bosom stealing,
Sighs that silent measure keep,
Groans that grieve and words that weep.
These the hapless poet tries
To regain his beauteous prize;

*Nor in vain—the strings obey,
 Love and musick bear the sway,
 Cerberus' rage their powers disarm,
 Stern Aleſto feels the charm,
 Tears from fierce Megæra flow;
 While attentive to his woe
 Suddens stops Ixion's wheel,
 Hell's fierce hawk forgets his meal;
 Tantalus astonish'd stood,
 Scorning now th' o'erflowing flood:
 Till at length stern Pluto cried,
 Conquering Poet take thy bride;
 Purchas'd by the powerful song,
 All her charms to thee belong;
 Only this command obey,
 Look not on her by the way;
 Though reluctant, still refrain,
 Till the realms of light you gain.
 But what laws can lovers awe?
 Love alone to love is law:
 Just emerging into light,
 Orpheus turn'd his eager sight,
 Fondly view'd his following bride,
 Viewing lost, and loving died.*

*To you whose gen'rous wishes rise
 To court communion with the skies,
 To you the tale is told;
 When grasping bliss th' unsteady mind
 Looks back on what she left behind,
 She faints, and quits her hold.*

22 JY 69

F I N I S.